

The Illustrious and Renowned
H I S T O R Y
OF THE
S E V E N
FAMOUS CHAMPIONS
OF
CHRISTENDOM.

IN THREE PARTS.

Containing their honourable Births, Victories,
and noble Atchievements, by Sea and Land,
in divers strange Countries: their Combats
with Giants and Monsters. Wonderful
Adventures, Fortunes and Misfortunes, in
Desarts, Wilderesses, and enchanted Cas-
tles: their Conquests of Empires, King-
doms; relieving distressed Ladies, with their
faithful Loves to them; the Honours they
won in Tilts and Tournaments, and Success
against the Enemies of CHRISTENDOM.

ALSO,

With the heroick ADVENTURES of
ST. GEORGE'S THREE SONS.

TOGETHER WITH

The Manner of their untimely Deaths, and
how they came to be stiled

SAINTS and CHAMPIONS of CHRISTENDOM.

L O N D O N:

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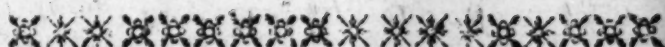
READER,

IN this famous HISTORY you will find such excellent passages of true knighthood, and feats of arms, mixed with other rare and pleasing adventures, that no history is furnished with. The subject matter has been so universally accepted and applauded among all sorts of people in the Four united Kingdoms, that it needs no strained rhetorick or encomium to set it off, or recommend it to the world. The method is plain and easy, suited to the meanest capacity, to enrich the fancy, as well as to divert the learned; for in the variety of passages herein mentioned, honour, justice, love, and compassion to the distressed, are so twined and interwoven as to make up a flourishing garland of desirable virtues, to adorn the minds of those that are admirers of them; so that in the search of many large histories of this kind, that is not to be found in volumes which is here briefly comprized. In one sense, it cannot fail to stir up and inspire heroick souls to the enterprizing great and noble exploits and undertakings, to

crown their memories in after ages, nor to be a pattern to guide them in the steps of those who for constancy, chastity, and all other winning graces, have rendered (especially) the fair sex, famous and worthy of esteem.

To conclude, it is a garden of delight, out of which may be gathered a posie to delight and improve the understanding, and refresh the memory, in the knowledge of things past, lively describing famous cities, monuments, princes courts, countries, and other things, as well as battles and glorious achievements, &c. That it must of necessity be pleasant to the reader, to whose judicious perusal, as likewise well-wisher, I recommend it.

VALE.



A short POEM on the Work.

THE Christian Champion's glory we proclaim,

Who through all dangers bravely follow'd
Fame;

In foreign lands their countries did renown,
Made Pagans stoop, and brav'd each tyrant's
frown;

To the distressed friends they always stood,
And glory'd only in their doing good.

No carpet knights they were, but of true
mould,

Outshin'd in steel those that now boast of gold.
True worth their names eternally make live,
Whilst kings their badges as choice honours
give,

Worn by Nobles, and each country's proud
They as their titular patrons are allow'd,
Whilst to their festivals with joy they croud.

THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS
H I S T O R Y
OF THE
S E V E N
Champions of *Christendom*.
P A R T I.

CHAP. I.

*The Parentage and Birth of St. George, and
how he was stolen away by an Inchantress.*



NOT long after the destruction of Troy,
sprung up the Seven Wonders of the
World,

World, the Seven Champions of Christendom. St. George for England, St. Dennis for France, St. James for Spain, St. Andrew for Scotland, St. Anthony for Italy, St. Patrick for Ireland, and St. David for Wales. St. George was born in the City of Coventry, and for his magnanimous deeds of arms in foreign adventures, had the title given him of, The Valiant Knight St. George of England, whose golden garter is still worn by kings, princes, and noblemen, in memory of his many victories. When his mother was conceived of him, she dreamed she was with child of a dragon, which should be the cause of her death; which dream she concealed till her painful burden grew so heavy her womb was not able to bear it; so that at length she revealed it to her husband, who was then Lord Steward of England. This dreadful dream struck such terror into her husband's heart that he was speechless; but recovering, he assured her that he would try the utmost that art and nature could do, to find out the meaning of this dream; and taking only one knight with him, goes to the solitary walks of Calyb, the wise lady of the woods, and taking a lamb to offer sacrifice to the enchantress with them, they came to an iron gate, whereon hung a brazen horn for them to wind, that would speak with the enchantress. They first offered the lamb with great devotion before the iron gate, and then, without any fear, they blew the brazen horn, the sound whereof made the earth to tremble; after which, they heard a terrible

voice out of the earth, uttering the following words—

Sir Knight, be gone, and mark me well,
Within the Lady's womb doth dwell
A son, who like a dragon fierce,
His mother's tender womb shall pierce;
A valiant champion he shall be
In noble acts and chivalry.
Be gone, I now bid you adieu;
You'll find what I have told is true.

This dark riddle being thrice repeated, so amazed them, that they thought to wind the horn the second time, to know the meaning of it; but not daring to venture, they left the enchanted cave. In the mean time, the lady had such a bitter labour, that either she or the child must perish; upon which, she, for the good of her country, was content her tender womb should be opened, that the child might be taken out alive: so, being cast into a dead sleep, the operation was made. He had on his breast the lively picture of a dragon, a blood-red cross on his right-hand, and a gold garter on his left leg. They named him George, and provided him three nurses, one to give him suck, another to keep him asleep, and the third to provide him food. Soon after his birth, the enchantress Calyb stole the infant from the careless nurses. The noble Lord now returning, met with the doleful tidings of the death of his Lady, and the loss of his son. He

WAS

was extremely grieved with these two lamentable misfortunes, and sent messengers to all countries, to find out his son, but could hear no tale nor tidings of him, which soon brought him to his grave.

The witch Calyb had detained St. George in her cave fourteen years, and at length fell in love with him, which he declined, his mind being set upon martial adventures; nevertheless, hoping to obtain his liberty, if in case she made him master of all that enchanted place, he seemed willing, and wound himself in by degrees to have her yield all her power over unto him, which she willingly did; and he intreated her to tell him his birth, his name, and parentage. "Thou art," quoth she, "by birth, son to the Lord Albert, High Steward of England, and from thy birth, to this day, have I kept thee as my child, and my virginity for thee." So, taking him by the hand, she led him into a brazen castle, wherein remained six of the bravest knights in the world. "These are," said she, "six worthy champions of Christendom; the first is St. Dennis of France, the second St. James of Spain, the third St. Anthony of Italy, the fourth St. Andrew of Scotland, the fifth St. Patrick of Ireland, the sixth St. David of Wales, and thou art born to be the seventh; thy name being St. George of England, for so shalt thou be called in time to come." Then, taking him by the hand, she led him into a fair large room, where stood seven of the goodliest steeds that ever eye beheld.

"Six of these," saith she, "belong to these six knights, and the seventh will I bestow upon thee, whose name is Bucephalus, the name of Alexander's great horse. Moreover, she led him into another room, wherein was the richest armour in the world; so chusing out the strongest coilet from the armoury, she with her own hands buckled it about his breast, laced on his helmet, and attired him with a rich caparison, then fetched forth a huge faulchion, and put it on his hand. "Now," quoth she, "thou art invincible, never to be conquered, for now hast thou the strongest armour in the world, and a sword shall cut the hardest flint asunder." Thus being blinded with her own lust, she put a silver wand in his hand, which wrought her own destruction; for then had he power of all the enchanted wood; so, as they were walking along, by a mighty rock, which the Knight perceiving, struck with the silver wand, so that the rock opened, and there did he see before his eyes a number of little infants which she had murdered by her enchantment. "St. George," quoth she, "I will shew thee more than this, if thou wilt follow me." So, stepping in, he with his enchanted wand struck the rock again, and the rock cloied her in, and there was the end of the famous inchantress, where we will leave her to the fury of the devils, and speak more of St. George, who released the six champions out of captivity, they giving him many thanks, went with him to seek their fortunes, whose

whose matchless deeds shall be shewed in the following chapter,



C H A P. II.

How St. George killed the burning Dragon in Egypt, and redeemed Sabra the King's Daughter from Death—How he was betrayed by the King of Morocco, and sent to the Soldan of Persia, where he slew two Lions, and remained seven Years in Prison.



SOON after the Seven Champions departed from the enchanted cave of Calyb, they stayed

stayed awhile in the City of Coventry; in which time they erected a stately monument in honour of St. George's mother: and so, in the beginning of the spring, they took their leaves one of another, and went every one a different way to seek their fortunes, where we shall leave the six champions to their contented travels, and wholly discourse of our countryman, the chief of them, St. George of England, who travelled till he came into the territories of Egypt, where he met a poor hermit. St. George demanded of him, where he might have lodging for himself, and stable room for his horse. "Sir Knight (quoth the old hermit) you seem by your habitments to be an English man, for I perceive the arms of England engraven upon your armour. Sir, I pity you, you are as far from having relief here as you are in distance from your own country, by reason of a fiery dragon, which every day devours a virgin; and in case he miss of one but one day, then doth he send forth such an infectious plague among us, that the people die so fast that the living can scarce bury the dead, and hath destroyed all the virgins in the land, but the King's daughter, and she is to be sent to-morrow morning to be devoured by this fiery dragon. Now the King hath made proclamation through all his realm, That if any Knight were so hardy as to encounter with this dragon, and kill him, he shall have his daughter in marriage, and the crown after his decease." Upon hearing of which, St. George resolved

resolved to venture his own life, to set the lady free; intreating the old man to give him leave to lodge that night in his cave, and next morning he would be ready for the encounter. The old man, overcome with joy, had him to his cave, and kindly entertained him with such homely fare as he had. Next morning, St. George mounted on his steed, took his leave of the good old hermit, who remained in his cave, to pray for the good success of St. George, who now is posting away to encounter with the fiery dragon, where, upon the way, he overtakes the woeful virgin, the King's daughter, accompanied with a number of sorrowful matrons, bewailing her unfortunate fate. St. George comforts them up with these words—

Fair Princess, and ye matrons all,

Refrain, and mourn no more;

For by the fiery dragon's fall,

Your freedom I'll restore:

The dragon is your enemy;

I'll quickly end the strife;

I'll clip his wings, he shall not fly,

Or George shall end his life.

The Princess, beholding St. George's courage, admired that he, being a stranger, should adventure himself for her sake, when the stoutest champions in all Egypt durst not.

Sir

Sir Knight, I give you thanks, quoth she,
That undertakes this fight;
And since it is for love of me,
The King shall you requite:
And if you perish in this thing,
The which you take in hand,
Next comes the daughter of a King,
As well you understand:
Go forth, and prosper, worthy Knight,
And leave me sore perplex'd:
If you marry in the fight,
Then I must be the next.

St. George kissed the Princess's hand, and vowed to free her, or lose his life, entreating the company to conduct her to her father's palace, till they heard farther.

Now as St. George entered the valley, and coming next to the cave, the dragon espied him, and sent forth such a terrible bellowing, as if all the devils in hell had been present. St. George was never a whit daunted, but spurred his horses, and run outrageously at him; but his scales being harder than any brass he shivered his spear in a thousand pieces, and withal smote St. George so hard with his wings and tail, that he struck him down from his horse, and bruised him sore. St. George then was forced to draw his sword, where began a most terrible fight between him and the dragon, and the good Knight was almost poisoned with the breath of the dragon, so that he was forced to retire; and spying a fruit which no veno-
mous

mous thing durst come near, eat of the said fruit, and recovered again, and then with manly courage assaulted the dragon in such sort that he felled him under his horse's feet. The dragon, recovering himself, lifted up his wings as if he intended to fly away, which St. George noting, and espying a bare place under the dragon's wing, run his sword up to the hilt, which so pierced his heart, that with a terrible noise he breathed out his last breath, and yielded his life to the conqueror. St. George smote off his head, and set it on a piece of the spear he broke against the dragon; then gave God thanks, and marched towards King Ptolemy's court, but adverse Fortune crossed his purpose; for, instead of ringing of bells, and entertaining of him as a royal champion, for freeing their country from that destroying monster, he beheld certain armed men marching towards him with their swords drawn; for Al'mindor, King of Morocco, had hired twelve men in arms to surprize St. George, he having a great mind to Sabra, the King's daughter, and fearing St. George would obtain her before him, therefore intended to make him away before he came to the Court with his dragon's head; but never was it known that ever treachery did ever prosper. As for St. George, he behaved him so gallantly, that he vanquished all his enemies in little space, which when the King of Morocco perceived, (for he was not far off) he ran to the King of Egypt, and told him the enemy of his country was destroyed, but never told him of his

his own treachery against the Champion: but when the King heard of the destroying the dragon, he rejoiced greatly, and commanded them to ring the bells, and make bonfires, and entertain the champion with great joy and gladness; which was done accordingly. Now when St. George came to the Court, the King did welcome him with great banquetings, tilts, and tournaments, especially the Princess, who then did place her love upon him so fervently, that all the world could not remove it. Now, it was the order of the Court, to present rich gifts to those of rank and quality: now the Princess presented him, with her own hand, a diamond of great worth, which he wore on his finger, set in a ring of gold. Now the King of Morocco, (that implacable devil) envying the happiness of St. George, sought a second time to make him away by poison, which he conveyed into a cup of Greek wine, and presented it to St. George, in token of love, when he meant nothing less than his destruction; but no sooner had he the cup in his hand, but the diamond waxed pale, and three drops of blood fell from his nose, whereupon, St. George refused to drink, and the Princess, who loved him as she loved herself, cried out—
“Treason, treason!” But the King of Egypt, her father, would believe nothing against the King of Morocco, so greatly did he love and dote upon him, which made him the bolder to attempt any thing against St. George; inso-much, that he went to the King, and informed him,

him, that St. George was a Christian, and one that was an enemy to their religion; which when the King heard, he swore by all his Gods, that he should die the death, forgetting the saving of his daughter's life, and the freeing of his country from utter destruction. Moreover, the black King of Morocco told him, that he went about to persuade his daughter to turn Christian, which made the King to be the more enraged; whereupon, he wrote a letter to the Soldan of Persia, and sealed with the arms of the nation, that he should make St. George away, for he was an enemy to their religion, and to their Gods; and when he had done, he sent St. George with his own destruction, and gave him a great charge to deliver it to the Soldan of Persia, for it was a matter of great concernment. St. George, thinking it an honour to go on such a message, went, good Knight, like a lamb to the slaughter. No sooner was he arrived in Persia, but he espied some of their temples open, into which he went, and cast down all their images, and trod them under foot; insomuch, that the people of the country arose in great numbers to take St. George, and carry him to the Soldan of Persia, as an enemy to their religion: but St. George did lay about him so, for the honour of God and Christendom, that in one day he slew about five hundred Persians; so that they were fain to fire their beacons, and raise all the country before they could take him: so, when they had taken him,

him, they brought him before the Soldan, and informed him what he had done; who swore by all his Gods, that he should die the cruellest death that ever could be invented: St. George, nothing at all daunted, told him, he could do no more than God gave him leave; and told him moreover, he had a letter to deliver to him from Ptolemy, King of Egypt; which when he had read, he was more enraged than he was before, and commanded his guard to take him, and cast him into a deep dungeon, where he should behold no light, until the day of execution. After he had been there three days, some of the enraged Persians let down two great lions, which had not eat any thing for the space of fourteen days. When St. George heard the roaring of the lions, he began to think with himself what he might do to save his life, when on a sudden he broke his cords that bound his arms, and stepping aside, he trod upon an old rusty sword, which he took up, and behaved himself so valiantly, that he killed both the lions; which when the Soldan heard, he was much terrified, and said, he would keep him there still, lest he should destroy the whole nation; so St. George lived there full seven years on rats and mice, and such like vermin as the prison did afford. In the mean time, Ptolemy, King of Egypt, forced fair Sabra, against her mind, to marry the King of Morocco, whom she hated as she hated the devil, being the professed enemy of her beloved St. George of England. But she had

had vowed the King of Morocco should never spoil her of her virginity; and to that purpose she went to a negromancer, and asked his council therein, who gave her this advice—to take a chain of gold, and let it lie seven days in dragon's milk, and seven days in tyger's blood, and so put it about her neck; and so long as she wears that chain, no man shall have power to take her virginity from her; which she did, and so preserved her virginity for her English champion, who (under GOD) preserved her from the fiery dragon of Egypt.

Now leave we fair Sabra with her black King of Morocco, and her beloved English George in the dark dungeon, and now speak something of the other champions, who were divided into several parts of the world; and first of the noble champion St. Dennis of France.



C H A P. III.

How St. Dennis of France lived seven Years in the Shape of a Hart—how proud Eglantine, the King's Daughter of Theffaly, was transformed into a Mulberry Tree; and how they both recovered their Shapes by the Means of St. Dennis's Horse.



FAIR Eglantine, daughter to the King of Theffaly, for her pride, was transformed into a mulberry tree, in the wilderness of Arabia; and it was St. Dennis's fortune to travel through that unhappy place, where this unfortunate lady was transformed into a mulberry tree; and being almost starved, was forced to eat roots, or any wild fruit he could find: and

wan-

wandering about this desert, at length he came to this mulberry tree, where beholding some fruit on it, he began to eat; and he no sooner had tasted of these berries, but he was translated into a hart, where, beholding himself in a spring, he began to bewail his misfortune in this manner—

I was a man that fame did gain,
But now a hart in show;
When I shall be a man again,
Alas! I do not know.

The Voice in the Mulberry Tree.

Be patient now, brave Knight, said she,
Thy case is just like mine;
But you and I shall one day see
Our honours both to shine.

Seven years thou shalt continue so,
Hunger increase thy woes;
At length thou shalt end all thy woe
By eating of a roe.

When he had heard this voice, he stood much amazed, and speechless for sorrow, considering how long a time it would be ere he should return again to the society of men: but his speech getting utterance, he thus bewailed his misfortune—

“O wretched

“O wretched creature, and miserable! (said he) how am I confined in this solitary place, exposed to hardship and danger, in the shape of a beast, and subject to many misfortunes more than I yet know! Accursed was the time I wandered to this unlucky place, to be scorched by the sun’s beams in summer, and wet with showers, and in winter to have snow my covering, and no human food to sustain me.” Upon this, tears burst from his eyes, and sighs from his afflicted breast; yet, so enchanted he was, that he could not remove from thence, nor cared he much to endeavour it, till his proper shape returned, lest he should fall as a prey to common hunters, which he remembered once was Acteon’s fate, so transformed by Diana, for presuming to see her bathing naked in a crystal fountain; and it more likewise grieved him that he could not be in arms to succour distressed ladies, and rid the world of oppressors and tyrants: yet was he compelled to bear all with as much patience as his fortitude could arm him with. All this while his gallant steed never left him, but grazed near him, and sympathized with his master’s sorrow, and brought him boughs, which he had plucked from the spreading trees with his teeth, to make him a shelter; and thus it passed with him till seven summers and winters had passed over his head: then, one morning, as he was praying to Heaven for mercy and deliverance, he perceived at a distance his horse labouring to clambour up a steep rock, and

and having stayed a while there, he descended with a branch of a rose tree, on which were three roses of Jerusalem: he had no sooner brought it to him, but he remembered the voice in the mu'berry tree, whereupon, he greedily eat one of them, and reserved the other for fear the like danger might befall him, or any of the champions in other places. He had no sooner suggested it, but his hair fell off, and he assumed his manly shape, finding himself exceedingly refreshed.

Upon this, he heard the voice as of a woman weeping in the hole of the tree, intreating him to cut down the tree, and deliver her, for now the time was accomplished. With that, remembering where he had laid his sword, he fetched it, and with divers violent blows, felled it out of the hollow, underneath which sprung a beautiful lady naked, whom he covered with his mantle, who made him great reverence, styling him her deliverer, saying, her name was Eglantine, daughter to the King of Theffaly, who had been by enchantment, for her intolerable pride, confined to that place. Then travelling in the most beaten paths, they found the way out of the wilderness, and she being mounted behind him, he conveys her to her father's court, where they were received with more joy and welcome, than I can express.

C H A P. IV.

How St. James, the Champion of Spain, continued seven Years dumb for the Love of a fair Jewess—and how he should have been shot to Death by the Maidens of Jerusalem; with other Things that happened in his Travels.



NOW St. James was minded to travel to Jerusalem, and passing over the confines of Sicily, near the burning lake, had a most terrible battle with a fiery drake, for seven days and seven nights; and then passed through Capadocia, then through a wilderness of monsters. At length, at the sight of fair Jerusalem,

lem, which appeared in his sight the fairest city in the world, inhabited by jews. Just at the time of his arrival, the King of the country, with all his Knights at Arms, prepared themselves for hunting; for the country at that time was much annoyed with wild beasts, as lions, bears, tigers, and such-like; the trumpets sounding before them in such manner, which made the Spanish champion amazed; and wondering what the meaning should be, enquired of a shepherd, who told him, that the King, and all his Nobles, were intended that day to hunt, the country being much annoyed with wild beasts; and the King had made proclamation, That whosoever killed th



first boar, should have a great reward. Awry rode St. James, and was in the forest before them

them all, and by that time the King came, he had killed the greatest boar that ever mortal man beheld, who lived in a cave upon the flesh of people which he had slain; the King said, he deserved the reward; but withal demanded what countryman he was, and of what religion. St. James said, he was a Spaniard by birth, and a Christian by profession. When the King heard that, he was wroth, and said ~~thus~~ unto him—"Presumptuous Christian, didst thou never hear of the laws and customs of our nation, that what Christian soever dares approach into our confines, shall straightway be put to death? Yet in regard thou hast done good service for our country, in destroying this wild boar, thou shalt have the favour to chuse thine own death." St. James, admiring that he should be so ill rewarded for his good service, yet, seeing it was their law, and the King's pleasure it should be so, he chose to be shot to death with arrows by the hands of a virgin: divers virgins were sent for, who seeing St. James bound fast to a tree, with his breast naked to receive the shaft, beholding also his comely shape, and considering what good he had done for their country, in killing the wild boar that had destroyed so many, utterly refused the same; insomuch, that the King commanded that they should cast lots, and on whom the lot fell, she should be his executioner. Lots were made, and the lot fell upon the King's own daughter, the fair Princess, whose name was Cele, who no sooner beheld his

his manly and admirable beauty, but Love seizing her tender breast, she cast the bow and arrow out of her hand, and falling on her knees before her father, begged for his life in these terms—

“Great Sir, if ever pity moved your breast, behold with compassion the tears of your most obedient daughter on her bended knees, and grant my request.”

“What is it?” said he.

“Ah!” replied she, “that this worthy champion, this man, whose fame is spoken of loud through the world, may not be basely slain. How ungrateful will it be in the ears of all nations, when it is told you have murdered so brave a knight, who had ventured his life in rescuing your country from its bloody enemy!”

“Well,” said the King, “since you have interceded for him, I cannot deny his life to your tears: but this is an unalterable decree—That he be banished the territories of India, as an enemy to our religion, and shall surely die, if ever he return again.”

At this she was exceeding sad, but could no further prevail: so, rising, she went and unbound him with her fair hands, saying—Most noble Knight, I have gained your life and liberty, yet cannot prevail that you may stay in this land, though I most earnestly desire your company; since in your absence I must be as one banished, without peace or rest. Let my blushes excuse me, when I tell you I love you;

and let not the forwardness of a virgin make you the less value her who can no longer stifle her passion.

The noble Knight received the knowledge of her love in the most obliging terms; being at the same time struck with the like passion for her. He kissed her fair hand, styling her his deliverer, vowing his perpetual love and constancy, promising, though now her father's rigid and unjust sentence forced him away, he would, ere long, return, and convey her to his country: so, with a tender kiss, she slipped a diamond ring on his finger, and they parted, not without tears in their eyes.

The Spanish Champion riding some miles, alighted to rest himself on the edge of a forest, and there began to think his honour would suffer through imputed fear, in his so tamely leaving his lovely Princess; wherefore, he resolved to return to the Court in disguise, and, that his speech should not betray him, to feign himself dumb. This he put in practice, and was in disguise of an Indian, received into the King's service. The Princess, for the noble spirit she saw in him (though in that disguise she knew him not, appointed him her champion in all cases; when so it happened, that Nabuzaradan, King of Arabia, and the Calif of Babylon, came to Court, where both fell desperately in love with her, striving with musick and singing who should get most into her favour; when coming, make their presents, which were very rich. St. James making his
likewise;

likewise, as being one amongst them, slipped the diamond ring into her hand, which knowing, she retired to her chamber, and sent for him, where he discovered himself to her great joy. So it was contrived between them, whilst the Court was busy in revelling, to make their escape, which they did on swift horses that night; and after long travel, to their high satisfaction, they arrived safely in Spain.



B 4

CHAP.

C H A P. V.

How St. Anthony slew a Giant, and released many Ladies out of Captivity—How St. Andrew travelled into a Vale of walking Spirits—How St. Patrick redeemed six Thracian Ladies from thirty Satyrs, and of their Travel to find out the Champion of Scotland—How St. David slew the Count Palatine, and how he was sent to the enchanted Garden of Ormisdine, where he slept seven Years, and was redeemed by St. George.



BECAUSE I would willingly return to St. George, our countryman, I will tell you briefly

briefly the fortunes and adventures of the rest of the Christian Champions; and first of the noble Champion St. Anthony of Italy.

After his passage through many dangerous places, he came to the top of a mighty mountain, whereon stood a castle; within this castle remained a giant, who for strength no man durst encounter. This giant kept within his castle the seven daughters of the King of Thracia, whereof six of them were transformed into swans, with crowns upon their heads, because they would not yield to the lust of the giant; the other remained with him, to play and sing him asleep. This great giant St. Anthony slew, and left the castle to them, whereby their father, the King, might have access unto them, as you shall hear hereafter.

The famous Champion, St. Andrew of Scotland, travelled through a vale of walking spirits, most fearful to behold, and had not seen the light of the sun in seven days, nor yet the light of the moon by night, but was only guided by a walking fire till he came to a castle, before which castle lay the giant which St. Anthony slew, his flesh rent and torn by wild foxes, crows, and such like. The Champion, St. Anthony, entered the castle, where he found the King of Thracia bewailing his daughters ill fortune, with many of his nobility with him, calling upon their Gods in behalf of his daughters; which when St. Anthony saw, he smiled, and said unto the King—"If you will believe in the Christians God, and call upon

him with me, your daughters shall be restored to their former shapes again." No sooner had he spoke, but they all drew their swords, and ran upon him altogether, insomuch that they put St. Andrew hardly to it; nevertheless, after a very hot dispute, St. Andrew overcame them, and the King himself lay at his mercy, who presently turned Christian, he and all his followers; so, calling upon the Lord of Hosts, suddenly the King of Thracia's daughters were restored again to their former shapes, being more beautiful than ever they were before, which mercy when the King saw, he continued Christian to his dying day. But when the King and his daughters came to Court, all their joy was turned into sorrow; for the champion of Italy, who slew the giant, had stole away the King's daughter, fair Rosalinde, so all the land was up in arms in pursuit of him, which when St. Andrew of Scotland understood, he departed privately, and the King's daughters understanding that he was gone, travelled after him, as knowing, under God, that he was the cause of their delivery out of bondage.

These six daughters of the King of Thracia travelled till they came to Ireland, hoping to find the Champion of Scotland, but instead of finding him, they met with thirty wild and cruel Satyrs, who haled them through woods and groves, and tore and rent them in such a grievous sort, that forced them to cry out in a most lamentable manner; so that the woods
and

and all the country did ring of their pitiful cries. St. Patrick, who all this while was wandering about the country, hearing of these fearful cries, stood awhile amazed, and drawing his sword, ran up to the top of a high hill, where he beheld a lamentable spectacle, thirty terrible Satyrs with clubs on their shoulders, dragging these fair ladies by the hair of the head, who resolving to free them or lose his life, he went forwards towards them, in this manner — “ Ladies, (quoth he) be of good comfort, for I intend, if God be so pleased, to free you; whereupon, he let fly at them in such sort, that he slew the chiefest of them, which made all the rest to take their heels and run



away. St. Patrick demanded of those virgins what they were; who told him that they were

the King of Thracia's daughters, and how they were for seven years kept in captivity by a mighty giant, and transformed into swans by Diana the Goddess of Chastity, to keep and preserve them from the insatiable lust of the giant, and how their eldest sister remained a pure virgin with the giant, until St. Anthony of Italy came and slew the giant, freed their sister, and carried her to the Court to their father, who, with a great number of knights, came to see them, and bewailed their sad condition, who were all swimming in a pond in the shape of swans, with crowns of gold upon their heads, to shew they were the daughters of a King. Our father's tears prevailed not, nor the prayers of all that were with him who prayed for us to their Pagan Gods, until the Christian Champion, St. Andrew, came by, who seeing the dead body of the giant, not knowing who slew him, ventured into the castle, where beholding our father with all his knights, weeping and wailing, and praying to their Pagan Gods, began to laugh them to scorn, and wished them to call upon the God of the Christians, and he would warrant them that we should be restored to our pristine shape again. He no sooner had said these words, but my father gave command to all his knights of arms to fall upon him and kill him; but he behaved himself in such a gallant manner, that he worsted them all, and the King our father, lay at his mercy, who presently turned Christian with all his knights, who calling upon the
Christians

Christians God, we were all restored unto our former shapes again. But all their joy was turned into sorrow, by reason the Champion of Italy, who slew the Giant, and freed my sister, had stole her away in my father's absence. When St. Patrick heard this, he said—Worthy ladies, these two champions are my friends, whom I have not seen these seven years: as for St. Andrew of Scotland, whom you seek, I will accompany you in the search of him.—Where we will leave them, and speak something of St. David, the Champion of Wales.

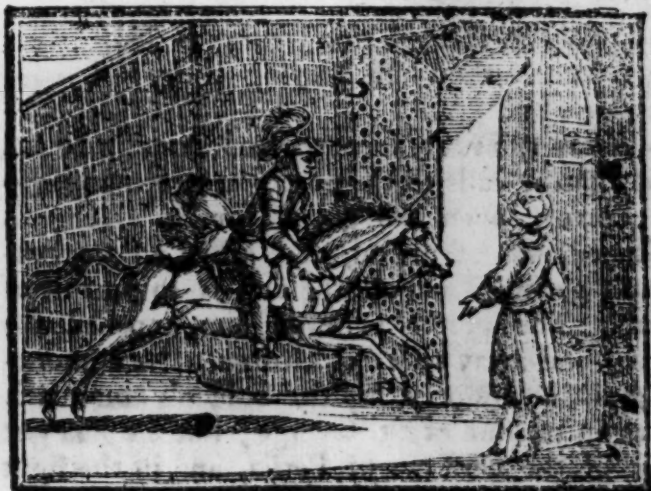
St. David of Wales travelling to the Emperor's Court of Tartary, performed such gallant deeds of service that the Emperor made him his chief champion; whereupon a festival day, the Emperor desirous of sport, caused tilt and tournament to be used. Now St. David being the Emperor's champion, entered the list first; so the Emperor's son, being Count Palatine, ambitious of honour, came straightway to answer him, and performed honourable deeds against St. David, the champion of Wales; for the first encounter he had almost thrown him off his horse, but the next turn St. David threw both horse and man to the ground, where the Emperor's son (the Count Palatine) was so bruised with the fall, that in short time after he died, which so enraged the Emperor that he plotted all he could to make him away. Nevertheless, he being well beloved of all the Court, the Emperor could not, without loss of honour, do it, only in regard St. David
was

was his champion, he sent him to the enchanted garden, to bring him the head of Ormandine the enchanter. St. David durst refuse nothing the Emperor enjoined him to; so he went with an undaunted courage, and found a sword fastened to a rock, upon the pommel thereof was written—"He that can pull me out, shall conquer all." St. David assailed to do it, but not being able, fell fast asleep for the space of seven years, till St. George, as you shall hear, at last came by the enchanted garden, pulled out the sword, and freed St. David, for by that means the enchanter died, and the enchanted garden vanished.

C H A P.

C H A P. VI

*How St. George escaped out of Prison at Persias
and how he redeemed the Champion of Wales
from his Inchan'ment.*



VALIENT and noble-minded St. George, enduring a seven years imprisonment in a dark and deep dungeon, and almost famished, was now weary of his life, where wandering about the dungeon, he at last espied a crow of iron; so he with this engine made his way through the dungeon into the middle of the Persian's Court. It was now about midnight; the moon shined bright, and all the Court at rest, only some grooms, who were making ready

ready the Soldan's horses to ride a hunting the next morning. St. George understanding of this, takes the crow of iron and kills all the grooms, and takes the best horse in the stable, and armed himself with the Soldan's own armour, with his sword, withal taking a coal he writes over the Soldan's chamber, after he had killed his guard, the following words—

Soldan, farewell, for George is fled,
Whilst thou liest sleeping in thy bed.

Away rides St. George, and coming to the city gates, calls to the porter in this manner—
“Porter, open the gates, for St. George is escaped out of prison, and killed all the Soldan's grooms, and all the city is in pursuit of him. The porter believed him, opened the gate, and away rode St. George. Next morning all the country, by the Soldan's command, was in pursuit of St. George; but he had got out of the confines of Persia, and in the sight of Grecia, which when they perceived, they left the pursuit, and returned back with great shame and horror. Now is St. George in the confines of Grecia, and almost in as bad a case for the want of victuals, as he was in the dungeon: at last, he came to a great castle, where stood a most gallant lady. St. George demanded some relief of her in the way of his travels; but she answered him with a frowning look, that her husband was a mighty giant, and willed him to be gone, lest if he come out he should

should crush him to pieces. St. George told her, he never was yet daunted by giant or monster, and he had rather die in fight, than die with hunger. No sooner had he said these words, but the giant came forth of the castle with a staring countenance, more like a devil than a man. But it was so, that between St. George and the giant was a most fierce and cruel combat; but the weather being extreme hot, and the giant fat, the sweat ran down his



face so fast, that it blinded him, whereby he could not see to ward the blows St. George gave him, so that he was constrained to let fall his club, and St. George with his sword clove his head asunder: so, entering the castle, refreshed himself and his horse, and so departed through the confines of Grecia into Phrygia, and

and at last came to the enchanted garden of Ormondine, where the champion of Wales continued sleeping for the space of seven years. But when St. George beheld the enchanted sword, he assailed to pull it out of the rock, and pulled it out with ease; so that the enchanted garden vanished, and the inchanter Ormondine delivered to St. George St. David, the champion of Wales. Then they viewed the strangeness of the place, and began to enquire of Ormondine how he came to undertake this way of living; whereupon tears standing in his eyes, he fetched a deep sigh, and said—"I was, when Fortune pleased, the King of Scythia, living in great pleasure and plenty, having by my wife two very beautiful daughters, the elder named Castria, with the brightness of her beauty so charmed Floridon, son to the King of Armenia, that he sought all manner of ways to gain her love; but not finding her so pliable as he wished, he resolved however, at any hazard, to enjoy her; so bribing her maid with a great sum, she conveyed him into her chamber in the night, where he had his wicked desire of her, with vows and protestations to become her husband. But when her womb began to swell, and she claimed his promise, he with reproachful words denied it, and utterly refused to make her his wife; and underhand courted my younger daughter Marcilla, upon whom not being able to gain his ends, as he did on the former, he married her. This so enraged Castria, that
since

Since she could no more enjoy him, that had dishonoured her, she resolved her sister should have no sweets of conjugal dalliances with him.

And as it is the custom of Scythia for a maid to keep her virginity the first night after she is married, she possessed her sister with a fear that the Armenian Prince, eager of enjoyment, would notwithstanding come to bed to her in the dark, and divest her of her virginity, if none lay with her to keep him from it; offering withal herself to be the person; which Marcilla kindly accepted; yet no sooner was they laid in bed, beautiful as an angel, but the revengeful Castria, with a dagger she had concealed in her bosom, stabbed her between her two ivory breasts; and being asked what she meant by that cruelty to one that had been so kind a sister to her, and never disoblighed her? She shewed her womb, and discovered the author of her shame, which now she no longer resolved to bear with; but with the yet reeking bloody dagger she stabbed herself, and both of them breathed out their souls at once: and to fill up the tragedy, Floridon coming next morning to look for his fair bride, and finding her covered with her own blood, and her sister dead by her side, he concluded his unconstant love had been the cause of it, and after great lamentation, he killed himself with the same dagger.

"These misfortunes," continued Ormondine, "possessed me so with grief, that I left all society, and raising this place by my magic art,

art, continued in it till now the enchantments escaped here. And when this was done, the furies fetched the enchanter Ormondine away with such a terrible noise, that scared St. George and St. David, the two stout champions of Christendom, and glad they were gone from among those terrible devils.

After St. David had given St. George many thanks, they departed one from another—St. David to the Tartarian Court, where, by oath, he was bound to bring news from the enchanted garden, and St. George to Barbary.



C H A P. VII.

How St. George arrived at Tripoly in Barbary; how he stole away Sabra, the King of Egypt's Daughter from the King of Morocco; how she was known to be a pure Virgin by the Means of Lions—how he arrived at the Emperor of Greece's Court. Met there the six Champions, and of their Exploits and Entertainments.

ST. George no sooner entered into the confines of Barbary, but he met with an old hermit, with whom he had some conference, and after he understood by the hermit where the Court stood, as also how the King of Morocco was gone a hunting with all his Lords, he thought

thought it now or never to be the time to release his fair Sabra out of the hands of his professed enemy the King of Morocco; and to that purpose disarmed himself, leaving his arms and horse, with a box of rich jewels, with the old hermit, and slipping on the old hermit's gown, took his journey to the Court, where he beheld a number of Palmers standing at the Court gate: he demanded of them what they stood there for; to whom they replied—They stood for an alms, which was given every day by the hand of the good Queen, in memory of the English champion St. George. Which when St. George heard, the tears stood in his eyes, and turning himself about, he at length beheld the joy of his heart coming forth to deliver her alms to the Palmers, asking them, if they had not known or heard of St. George of England.

At length, coming to St. George himself, he delivered the ring that she gave him privately, by which means she knew him, and taking him by the hand, led him into the hall, where they both wept for joy, she never expecting to see him again. “Now, my George (said she) if ever thou wilt free me it must be now, the time so convenient, the black King of Morocco, my forced husband, being gone out a hunting, whom I hate like the devil, and none left at home but one blackamoor, which shall go along with us to attend on us; so saying, she pulled off his gown, and put on his own armour, and girt his sword by his side,
and

and mounted him upon his own steed, and the Moor helping her up behind St. George, they posted away as fast as they could, passing thro' woods, desarts, and many dangerous places, among the wild beasts. At length, through hunger, St. George was forced to alight from his horse, and helped the lady down, leaving her in custody with the Moor, while he went to try his fortune with his sword in his hand, to get some food to keep them alive, for they were like to perish for want of victuals; so it was his fortune to kill a deer, and brought a haunch of venison upon the point of his sword. But when he came, he found the Moor torn in pieces with two lions, and the lions fast asleep, lying with their heads in fair Sabra's lap,



whereby he knew she was a pure virgin, and standing in amaze, not knowing what to do, at last resolv'd to set upon them, they being asleep,

asleep, lest if they should wake, he might endanger his life; so, stepping to them, he ran them thro' and slew them. Then, after they had given God thanks, St. George having a fire lock in his pocket, kindled a fire with brambles, and dressed their venison and eat it.

So, when they had well dined, St. George said to Sabra—"Now, my Sabra, I know thou art a pure virgin, otherwise the lions would have destroyed thee, as they did the Moor: but by what means thou hast kept thy virginity I know not."

"Then know, worthy George," said she, after I was forced by my father to marry with the King of Morocco, whom I loathed, I vowed to keep my virginity from him, and preserve it for thee, or live and die a maid, and to that end I asked council of a learned doctor, who advised me to steep my chain of gold, which I wear about my neck, in tyger's blood and dragon's milk seven days together, and all the while I wore it, no man should have power to rob me of my virginity, which I made trial of; and behold, though I lay with the King of Morocco, my husband, night after night, he had no power to meddle with me, so I remain still a virgin, and have kept my virginity for St. George of England.

When she had so said, they took horse and departed, riding thro' many vast countries and desarts, without meeting any adventures, till passing an arm of the sea, to hinder any further pursuit, they safely arrived in the territories of
Grecia:

Grecia: there, being well refreshed by a courteous hermit, they understood that the Emperor of Greece kept his royal Nuptial in the City of Constantinople, being lately married to a beautiful Princess; so that, being desirous to see the custom of strange courts, they resorted thither, in hopes to get shipping for England.

Here they found ladies and knights of most Christian nations, whom the fame of the royal nuptials, and their own curiosity, had brought them thither: and here, by good fortune, the Seven Champions, who had been so long parted, by taking divers ways at the brazen pillar, and run so many hazardous adventures, met again, bringing many of them their ladies with them. But above all, the beauty of fair Sabra was exceedingly admired, every one confessing the sun never in all his travels round the world, saw so bright a lady: nor was she only beautiful, but humble and modest in her carriage and behaviour; so that to entertain her and the rest, new tilts, tournaments, masks, dancing, bulls, and jests, were held for many days, to their wonderful contentment and recreation. And here it was the renowned Champions took every one his day, to maintain the combat against all opponents, doing such wonders by overthrowing the strongest knights of Greece, Hungary, Bohemia, and others, who resorted thither to break a lance in honour of their ladies, that they acquired to themselves trophies of renown and immortal fame: above all which St. George, who maintained the last day, issuing

ing out of his pavilion, which every one of them had erected very stately, according to the manner of their country, to distinguish them from other knights, mounted on a sable coloured steed, in trappings of burnished gold, his forehead beautified with a purple plume of feathers, spangled with gold, and pendants of gold, his armour of Lydian steel, shining like silver, his helmet beset with pearl and jasper-stones, with a tablet of gold hanging at his breast, whereon was engraven a silver lion rampant, crowned with gold, in a field of gules; in his helmet he wore a wreath of his lady's hair, and her glove, to shew he would maintain her to be the fairest on earth, against all that should dare to contradict it. Whilst she sat in a triumphant chariot of ivory, inlaid with golden roses, to be spectator of his heroic actions, which were so extraordinary, that they took from the rest much of the applause and honour that had been given to them by the shouting multitude, overthrowing horse and man, till at last, scarcely supposing him to be mortal, he was left alone in the list, none daring further to encounter him: whereupon, an oaken garland, like a crown, was placed on his head by the Heralds, in token of victory; whilst his bright lady greatly rejoiced among the trumpets sound, to see that the most valiant knight in the world was fallen to her, whom she prized above emperors, kings, and all the potentates of the earth.

10 Night being come, and the seven days appointed just ended, after a sumptuous entertainment, the Knights rested their weary limbs on their ladies soft bosoms, solacing in such raptures of pleasure, that no pen can express; so drawing the curtains, and leaving them unfolded in each others loving arms, I conclude this chapter.



CHAP.

C H A P. VIII.

How the Pagan Princes confederated to War against Christendom; and how the Seven Champions departing, raised many Forces in their own Countries, and arrived in the Bay of Portugal, choosing St. George their General.



WE find by fundry instances, that exce's of joy and pleasure rarely continues long; Fortune envies it, and sends crosses and unexpected accidents to allay them with disappointments and bitterness: so it happened in this case, for when they had the possession of all that was lovely and dear to them, and supposed to be arrived at the safe harbour of true

content, peace, and rest, a storm arose that drove them again into a hazardous and dangerous sea. The Pagan Princes, and others, whose daughters had followed the noble champions for the true love they bore them, and for other disappointments they had given them, incensed thereto by Almidore, King of Morocco, for the loss of fair Sabra, confederated together, and denounced a dreadful war against all Christendom; and hearing the Seven Champions were in the Greek Emperor's Court, thither they sent their Heralds with defiance, and many proud threats; reckoning up the injuries they alledged they had sustained; wrongfully taxing them with the ravishment of their daughters, destroying their people, and as Christians, utter enemies to their country; which in a full assembly they pronounced, which mighty preparations so terrified the Greek Emperor, that he fearing the wasting of his country, which the Pagan Potentates mostly bordered on, that he desired the Champions to retire from his Court with all speed, and sent ambassadors to make a peace for himself, with the Soldan of Persia, the Kings of Thess, Tartary, Egypt, Morocco, Jerusalem, and other far commanding monarchs of Asia and Africa. Yet the renowned St. George, before his departure, returned this answer to the Heralds.

‘ Barbarians,

‘ Barbarians,
 ‘ **K**NOW that your threats of war can in
 ‘ no manner terrify the noble courage of
 ‘ the Christians; we could justify and disprove
 ‘ whatever is laid to our charge; but scorning
 ‘ to condescend so low, lest it should be taken
 ‘ for a treaty, or fear; go tell your proud and
 ‘ injurious masters, That since they so much
 ‘ delight in blood and treachery, the scourge of
 ‘ war is the fittest instrument to chastize
 ‘ them: and since they desire it, we will bring it
 ‘ like a raging torrent, not only to their city
 ‘ walls, but the gates of their palace: fire and
 ‘ dissolution shall lay their countries waste.
 ‘ The Christians banner shall be planted in
 ‘ their proudest towns; their crowns shall stoop
 ‘ to the cross, whilst wading through seas of
 ‘ their subjects blood, and clambering over
 ‘ piles, heaps of the slain, we tumble them
 ‘ from their thrones.’

This said, with a vehement anger he stayed
 for no reply; but turning his back, he with
 the rest of the Champions and their ladies, left
 the city, and held a consult in a neighbouring
 forest. It was agreed, every one should repair
 to his own country, and make interest to raise
 forces to repel the threatening storm; and living
 or dying, immortalize their names in the de-
 fence of their religion and honour. This re-
 solve drew pearly tears from the bright eyes of
 the tender-hearted ladies, to think, after so
 many dangers and difficulties, they must again

part with their Lords they so dearly loved, to run new hazards, and stand the chance of so dreadful a war; but concluding their honours were engaged, and that they could not stand idle, but in the hazarding the loss of all Christendom, they dried up the precious dew, and seemed contented to leave the event of their safeties to fate and chance.

By this time, the heroic knights, whom no danger could shake, having appointed the Bay of Portugal to be the general rendezvous for all the European forces, went into their several countries, where their fame being sufficiently rumoured by their respective kings and princes, with great honours and triumphs, as the only miracles of valour and true knighthood. The general joy, on their returning home, was no sooner abated, but they declared the cause of their so speedy return; which was so highly approved both by the kings and people, so that setting up their standards, forces came armed and well appointed in such numbers upon the beat of drum, and sound of trumpet, as well Nobles as Plebeians, that by the spring they had furnished their complements; and with gallant fleets and armies, the greatest that ever Europe had seen, they arrived safe at the appointed haven. St. George with a hundred thousand valiant archers, spears, and men at arms, being the first that landed; covering the affrighted shores with his multitude. The rest of the champions brought a proportionable number, according to the largeness and populousness of their

their

their countries, all well appointed and richly furnished, so that the whole number amounted to upwards of five hundred thousand; having with them treasure sufficient, and other necessities for the war, both for the field, fight, and battering cities, towns, and castles. And there erecting a royal pavilion, they elected by one consent, St. George, General of this great army, whose banner was the bloody cross, his men wearing the like on their breasts, to denote that they fought in the Christian cause, and for it valued no cross, misfortunes, no, nor the hazard of their lives: whereupon, mounting on a throne, and assembling all the leaders, he made the following speech to encourage them—

‘ Renowned Warriors,

‘ **E**UROPE’s chief boast and glory, you
‘ are now called together to assert the
‘ cause of CHRIST, and the honour of the
‘ Christian religion, against the bloody Pagans
‘ and Infidels, who defy not only us, but the
‘ KING of HEAVEN, whose battles we
‘ have undertaken to fight, that we may chastize their insolencies and proud blasphemings
‘ so that living or dying, you may hope to be
‘ happy. Then be of courageous hearts, and
‘ let our enemies see what we dare do, and
‘ what folly they have committed in provoking
‘ us to anger. As for me, though now your
‘ General, you shall always find me as much

‘ exposed to danger as the meanest soldier,
‘ March bravely on then, and let us meet them
‘ in their own land, and make their countries
‘ the seat of war and desolation.’

This speech ended, a universal shout ensued
and they cried, as with one voice, “Lead us
against them.”



C H A P. IX.

How the Pagan Princes pitched their Tents in Hungary, to War against Christendom; of the bloody dissention that fell amongst them. Barbary subdued by the Christians, and Almidore, the Black King, taken and put to Death, &c.



THE Pagans all this while were not slow in raising the power of their countries, and by long marches came to their appointed rendezvous in the kingdom of Hungary, whose huge multitude soon devoured up all the pleasant things in that rich and fertile kingdom, being about eight hundred thousand, gathered

up in fifty-two various kingdoms; threatening no less than destruction to all Europe, and flattering themselves to return laden with the wealthy spoils of many kings and princes: but GOD, who disposes, when man proposes, prevented it, as in the sequel will appear.

No sooner were all the forces expected arrived, but they appointed a day for chusing a General, when such a spirit of division was sent amongst them, every nation striving to promote their own King to that dignity, and confusion awhile reigning among the common soldiers, at length discontent and discord happened among the leaders, so that many bloody blows and dangerous affrays ensued, so that, agreeing to nothing, the Soldan of Persia, the Kings of Egypt, Jerusalem, and many others, drew off their forces, and returned to their own country; greatly repenting they had undertaken so vain an enterprize. Nor did those that stayed by Almidor's persuasions, long agree, but dividing into parties, drew out and fought a dreadful battle among themselves, which lasted three days, with such dreadful slaughter, that the ditches were filled with blood, and the fields and lanes heaped up with dead bodies. The towns were ransacked and fired, virgins and matrons ravished, and ripped up alive, children tossed on spears, and dashed against the pavements, hoary hairs set weltering in blood. In fine, they not only destroyed one another, but made such a woeful desolation in the kingdom of Hungary, that the like has
never

never been known before nor since, so that for many years after it, was scarcely inhabited with any thing but wild beasts.

However, Almidore, whose party proved the strongest, and now most of the other leaders being dead, was made General, rallied his own men, and such as had fled and scattered from the battle; and finding them too weak to perform what he designed on the Christians, he took up his standard, and marched into his own country, whither St George, who had heard the disaster, and his flight, was got before to intercept him; and having taken many of his towns, he forced him to a battle, wherein, after a long and bloody fight, (for the Moors



fought obstinately for their King, often throwing themselves between him and death, to the
C 6 loss

loss of their own lives) he was taken prisoner by St. George, who had laid heaps of slain about him: and hereupon his men at a distance seeing his standard beaten down, and fancying no less than that he was taken or slain, fled in all parts, throwing away their arms, so that in the pursuit the fields were covered with their dead bodies.

The treacherous Almidore being now in the power of him whose life he had sought in Egypt, by sending armed knights to destroy him, when he was coming to the Court with the dragon's head, and had been the contriver of his imprisonment seven years in the Persian dungeon, and in the mean while robbed him of his heart's delight, the beauteous Sabra, he thought he could after such injuries, expect no mercy from the injured person; yet hearing he was to be thrown into a cauldron of melted lead and sulphur, the terribleness of his death so startled him, that coming to approach it, and seeing the molten substance sparkle like the flames of hell, he began to use all his cunning insinuation and wonted flattery, to escape the danger, offering a ransom of gold, jewels, silks, spices, &c. so great, that his whole kingdom, had it been sold, could not have purchased them. But this, and all other proffers, were refused by the injured champion, unless he would renounce his false gods, Tarmagant and Mahomet, which he utterly refusing to do, as also to turn Christian, and persuade his people to be baptized, and embrace the Christian faith, the sentence (with a solemn

solemn pomp, his Nobles attending in mourning robes, and many Virgins decked with Cyprus garlands, and in mourning vestments) was put in execution; whereat some of his subjects killed themselves to accompany him to the other world, as is the custom of the country. But the greater part rejoiced to be rid of a tyrant who had done them so many grievous outrages, by taking from them their wives and daughters at his pleasure, to satiate his lust; so that the Nobles came and presented the English Champion with the crown of that kingdom, placing it upon his head, with much royalty and feasting, delivering him all the other regal ornaments; when having taken an oath of them to turn Christians, he delivered the government into the hands of twelve of the chief of them, to keep it in his name, and be kind to all strangers, Christians that come into it to dwell, or pass through it.

These, and many other articles, being solemnly sworn to, he left a few forces in the cities of Tripoly and Morocco, with the sick and wounded soldiers, marching with the rest against Ptolemy, King of Egypt, to revenge the injury he had done him.

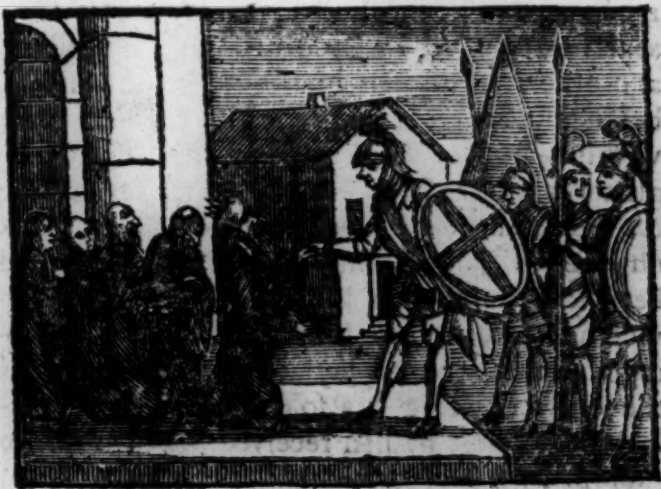
The Moors no sooner perceived the main forces were withdrawn, but, breaking their oaths, they burnt the sick and wounded soldiers alive in a monastery, and covered their ashes with dung, renounced their late baptism, returned to the worship of their idol gods, and massacred all the Christians they found in the
king-

Kingdom, in a most barbarous and inhuman manner, dashing out their brains, burning and ripping them up alive; and amongst others they seized in Tripoly an English Merchant, his wife and six children, and because the woman struggled with the Moor that would have ravished her before her husband's face, and vowed to kill herself, if he desisted not, he, to induce her to yield more patiently to his lust, stabbed all her children one after another, at different times, before hers and her husband's face, then baked them in pies, setting them before them to eat, or starve; which horrid spectacle made them both die of grief; whereupon they threw their bodies on a rock to be devoured by the fowls of the air, but the sun dissolved them, and the next year a bower of roses sprung up in the place.



CHAP. X.

How the seven Champions arriving in Egypt with their Armies. found the People every where fled—how Ptolomy the King humbled himself, and was pardoned; and of the heavy News St. George heard of Sabra, with Ptolomy's Death, &c.



THE army, as I have said, marching from Barbary, and passing peaceably through many countries of Africa, (who freely opened their gates, and received them friendly, providing them store of provision, and what else they wanted by the way, yet more out of fear

fear than love) they arrived on the confines of Egypt, but could perceive no preparations for war, so that, entering a good way, they found the villages deserted, and the city gates wide open, in which were none but a few aged and diseased people, uncapable of removing thence.

At this they wondered; but the wary General considered this might be a stratagem to catch them in an ambush, whilst they were straggling to gather the plunder; where, upon pain of death, he charged none to stir out of his rank, but to have their arms always in a readiness for fear of a surprize: and so they marched on, leaving heaps of gold and silver, and other rich things in the cities, untouched, behind them. They marched on till they came within sight of Ptolomy's palace, on whose glittering spires, St. George no sooner casting his eyes, but he burned with anger, to think on the indignities and treacheries, that had been there put upon him, for the worthy service he had done the king and kingdom, making a solemn vow to lay it in ruins as low as the dust; exciting his soldiers fury by repeating the wrongs he had received, to turn it into rubbish by flame, or any other means, and not to leave one stone upon another: and now being within bow shot of it, whilst he was ordering and preparing for the assault, contrary to his expectation, the gates flew open, and the King of Egypt, attired in deep mourning, attended with the chief of his Nobles in the like weeds, came a solemn pace towards him; after

after them followed the choicest soldiers of the kingdom, with broken swords and lances, their shields hanging on their backs: these were succeeded by a thousand women and children, with Cyprus wreaths on their heads, denoting their distressed condition, and olive branches in their hands, denoting they sued for peace. When they came near the champions, who stood at the head of their army to expect them, they fell on their knees, and made a lamentable cry, begging mercy; whilst the King in this manner spoke for himself and the rest.

‘ Worthy Knights,

‘ **W**HOSE arms are always victorious,
‘ behold a King kneeling, who never
‘ bowed before to mortal man, and pity his
‘ distress. I am constrained with shame to
‘ confess I have wronged this noble Champion
‘ of England, who deserved better at my
‘ hands; but, alas! I was over-persuaded to it
‘ by the Morocco King, and did not well
‘ know what I did, he so blinded my discern-
‘ ing faculties with insinuation and flattery,
‘ inculcating so many groundless fears and jea-
‘ lousies of our religion, and the safety of my
‘ kingdom, that it gained too much credit with
‘ me; but now I repent with tears that ever I
‘ listened to him; therefore forget and forgive
‘ what I have done: spare but my country
‘ from the devouring sword, and as for my-
‘ self, deal with me as you please; and this I
‘ conjure you, most noble St. George of Eng-
‘ land.

‘land, by all the love you profess and bear to
‘my daughter, whom you have in your pos-
‘session; so shall the blessing of that God you
‘adore ever unite your hearts, and make you
‘lastingly happy.’

He would have proceeded, but a flood of tears stopped his utterance; which low submission, and his hoary hairs, so moved the noble champion to pity him, that, contrary to his first resolve, he not only relented, but raising the King from his knees, embraced him, and freely forgave the offences he had done against him, on condition that he and all his people became Christians. This he willingly consented to; and moreover, entitled the rich kingdom of Egypt upon St. George and Sabra, to be entirely theirs after his death; so that the mourning of the land was hereupon turned into joy and songs, musick and feasting was every where, and the face of things seemed so altered, that nothing could express more satisfaction.

But during the time of this rejoicing, as St. George was about to march into Persia, to revenge his imprisonment on the Soldan, a Knight came riding up to him, almost spent and faint with haste and long journies, desiring to speak with him in private; and he knowing by his speech that Knight was of England, he readily consented to it.

As soon as they were retired, and the Knight had recovered his breath, he began his woeful story in this manner—

‘I come,’

‘I come,’ said he, ‘to bring you news of heaviness and sorrow; even that which has cast a melancholy cloud of sadness over the whole English nation, and will no doubt touch your heart nearer than any others. Your fair and virtuous Sabra, whom upon your departure you left at Coventry, is condemned to die.’

‘How!’ said St. George, trembling and starting back in amaze, ‘what wickedness could work such mischief in the world? She has no crimes that can deserve the sentence. Her soul is as bright as the unclouded sun, and her virtues nothing can blot or stain.’

‘This,’ replied the Knight, ‘I must own; yet what I say is certain truth, the defending her honour is the cause she dies; from which death nothing but a champion to fight her quarrel, and right injured innocence, can deliver: wherefore, she having a certain time allowed her to provide one, and all England; in your absence, not being able to afford one to encounter him who is her accuser, she has sent me to certify you of the danger she is in, as you will find by this letter, under her own hand.’ Whereupon, he delivered it, which St. George, still trembling, took, and opening hastily, read these words—

‘My dear Knight,

‘**F**OR the constant love I bear you, which nothing but death can obliterate, I am now in great distress; the which, if I would have yielded to have defiled my marriage-bed, I might

might have avoided: but for killing the ravisher, that by lawless lust would have invaded my honour and your right, I am now condemned to be burnt at a public stake, unless some kind champion in my quarrel can overcome the Baron of Chester, who is my accuser; but finding none ready to undertake my vindication, I have used the little time allowed me to advertise you, my dear Lord, of it; and leaving the consideration of my danger, I remain your chaste and loving wife, till death,

SABRA.

He no sooner read this letter, but his eyes sparkled as it were with fire, and his anger burned within him, till at last it broke out in these expressions—

‘Can ungrateful England thus abuse and dishonour me in the person of my dear lady? Have I deserved no better of her King and people? Well, this injury I would surely revenge, did not the thoughts of its being my native country restrain my hands from violent courses.’

Thus he had proceeded on to vent his anger, had not the Knight hastened him to begin his journey, minding him that the least delay in this case might be the loss of his lady’s life, which could never be recovered again.

Whereupon he communicated the matter to the other champions, with the necessity of his departure; whereupon every one of them singly offered

offered to go in his stead, that he might not be hindered in prosecuting his revenge against the Persian Soldan; but he would not trust this adventure that so nearly concerned him, to any but himself; whereupon he appointed St. David of Wales his Lieutenant General, taking courteously leave of the whole army, and he departed for England with all the speed he could, only accompanied with the Knight who brought him the heavy news. This sad story of Sabra no sooner came to the ears of her father, but through grief he fell into a strange kind of distraction, roving about his palace, and crying out his poor child was dead, his dear daughter was murdered; all that could be done to comfort him little availing, till at last those appointed to watch him being negligent of their charge, he threw himself over the battlements of his palace, and falling on the hard pavement was so bruised that he immediately died. But his body being taken up, he was buried in a sumptuous tomb among his royal ancestors, with great solemnity; the regency of the kingdom being by the Christian Knights delivered to the trust of twelve of the most noble men of the realm, to keep it in trust till the arrival of St. George and the Princess Sabra, if Fortune favoured them.



79 The History of the
CHAP. XI.

How St. George left Egypt and hasted to England—How he rescued Sabra, by killing the Champion her Accuser, and with what Welcome he was received, and other Matters.



ST. George being now on his way for England, made all the speed he could by sea and land, no adventures or delightful objects in his way being capable to divert him from the object his mind was fixed on, his joy being very great, when sailing from the Court of France he beheld the chalky cliffs on the shore of his native country.

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The same day he landed, was the expiration of Sabra's time, and every thing was preparing for her execution; yet she heard not of any champion that would contend to justify her honour and chastity: however, she took courage, and prepared with a steady mind to receive that death that evil chance had laid out for her; so through lanes of guards and crouds of pitying people, she was brought from the prison to the stake, where she prepared her delicate body, more soft than down of swans, and whiter than snow, as food for the greedy flames; for being stripped of her royal ornaments, even to her smock, she was bound with chains to the post by the common executioner, and pitch and other fuel placed about her: yet she seemed not at all daunted, though the sight of a suffering beauty, for committing a fact she was forced to for the safe-guard of her honour, drew tears from all eyes but her own; so that seeing death so near, she resolving to face it without terror, lifted up her hands and eyes towards Heaven, to ask strength and patience, and that God would receive her soul when it should mount in flames to his Almighty Throne.

Then the King being seated on a scaffold, under a canopy of purple, embroidered with gold and pearl, caused the herals to summon the challenger, who at the sound of the trumpet, came proudly prancing into the list, on a strong and stately steed, with a bridle of silver, and trappings of gold and precious stones. This person

person was Baron of Chester, and held to be the stoutest Knight in England, and undertook this matter because he was near a kin to the slain Earl of Coventry, and could not, without so doing, possess his lands. Whilst this Champion pranced his horses about the list, the defendant was summoned, but none yet appeared. This made the lady look as pale as ashes, and fall into a fit of trembling, making her swan like complaints of her hard fortune in these words—

“ Look down with pity, you bright coelestial forms, upon my innocence, and seeing what I have done was in defence of my life and chastity; look down, and pardon this forced blood shed: receive, Almighty Power, whose goodness has created me, a soul that is about to leave this dull earth, and fly to thee; or if it be thy pleasure I should longer continue here to praise thy glorious name, stir up the heart of some noble knight, inspiring him with pity, strength, and courage, to defend my cause against this insulter, who urges my destruction.”

This said, she stood fixed for any chance that might happen, either for death or life; but just as fire was going to be put to her funeral pile, kind Heaven heard her prayer, and sent her a deliverer. Her Lord was now at hand, who, had he came six minutes later, had left her for ever, and at a distance, to give notice on what errand he came, he caused the Knight that rode before him to wave his banner

ner of defiance, signifying thereby, that he intended to espouse the Lady's interest; so that the executioner stayed his hand till the knight came up, who made his formal challenge, demanding the Lady's liberty, or to combat unto death, in her defence, whoever durst oppose or declare her guilty of a crime.

Then the trumpets sounded the charge, which bloody blast was no sooner ended, but the two champions rushed together with such fury, as made the earth to tremble under their horses' feet: their spears shivered in a thousand pieces, and meeting with strong bodies, horse and men fell to the ground, wherein the Baron of Chester was so bruised, that he lay awhile on the earth, casting up much blood; but recovering a little, he nimbly leaped up, and came in great fury with his mighty faulchion, thinking at one deadly blow to revenge the disgrace of his foil, which he had never received from any Knight before, and struck so furiously at St. George, that he cleft his shield asunder; which so enraged the noble champion that lifting up his mighty sword Ascalon, of a true tempered edge, by its power and enchanted virtue, it cut quite through the other's armour, so that his arm was severed from his body, and his sword fell with it to the ground; so that by the effusion of blood he fainted, and dropped on the earth, crying out—"Worthy Champion, whoever thou art, be proud to have conquered me, who never was subdued before;

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before;" he, with a violent groan gave up the ghost.

Upon this, the shouts arose with universal joy, and while they lasted, the noble St. George went to the King, and demanded the captive Lady, which was readily granted him; whereupon, he immediately unbound her, and covered her delicate body from the injury of the weather, with a scarlet mantle, till the ladies who flocked to rejoice at her deliverance, had time to put on her own garments

Then St. George mounting her on his steed, went on foot, leading him by the bridle, till they came to the Court, where great preparations were made to entertain them. Here it



was that fair Sabra, pouring out abundance of thanks, fain would have known who, and of what

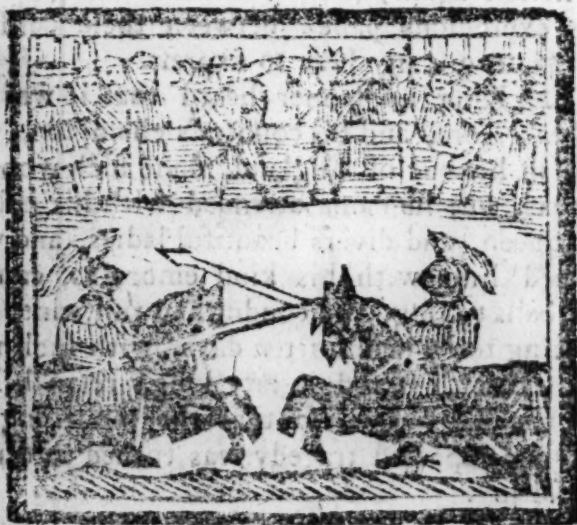
what country her deliverer was; but he concealed himself as yet, that her surprize might be the greater: at length, by the intreatment of her, and sundry other ladies, he consented to be unarmed. No sooner was his helmet taken off, but she knew him, and crying—
‘ Ah, my dear Lord!’ ran into his arms, that were spread to receive her, and swooned away in an extasy of joy too mighty for her spirits; but he and the ladies present soon brought her to herself again; then a thousand love endearing expressions passed between these constant lovers, too many here to express.

The King no sooner heard that it was fair Sabra’s Lord, and his country’s champion, who had in honour of England, done such wonders abroad, but he came attended with his nobles, his queen, and divers beautiful ladies, and welcomed him with his kind embraces, causing the bells to ring, the conduits to run wine, and feasting to be held for ten days, with such royalty, that this land in any king’s reign beheld not the like before, so that the mourning for the late expected tragedy was turned into universal joy.



C H A P. XII.

How St. George and Sabra left England—She relates to him the Story of her intended Ravishment—How they arrived in the Land of Amazons, with the Desolation they found there, caused by Inchantment.



THE noble champion St. George, having stayed about twenty days in England, remembered his companions that were now warring against the Soldan of Persia, in his quarrel, and concluding his honour would suffer

fer if he delayed returning any longer than was needful for his affairs, he took leave of the English Court, taking the beauteous Sabra along with him, resolving no more to trust that dear pledge of his love ever at the like distance from him again; and so passing the seas to Grecia, they made their nearest way to Persia: but wandering in Armenia, and on the Hyrcania mountains, passing to Baëtria, they found themselves out of the way, not knowing how to get into it again; however, they took courage, and sat down under a curious tuft of trees, by a curious fountain, to expect the coming of some traveller, that might direct them in a right course to Susa, a frontier of Persia: and here it was that St. George, to spin out the tedious hours, intreated his lady to tell him more of the particulars of her late adventure, than yet he had had leisure to be informed off. At this, she could not forbear trembling; but, recollecting her courage, she, to please her Lord, thus began—

“Some months after your departure, when you left me in your native country, I was entertained as becomed my quality, and had no care but for your safety, till one evening, going with some ladies to refresh myself in a pleasant grove without the walls, the lustful Earl of Coventry, meeting us on our return, cast his eyes on my little beauty, and was so enflamed with the desire of enjoying me, that he contrived, as I afterwards heard, several ways to bribe those that attended me, to let

him into my apartment, that he might surprize me at an advantage; but their faithfulness being above it, though they would not then tell me, for fear of disturbing my peace in your absence, he resolved to try it by flattery he could work upon me to yield up the fortress of my chastity; and therefore he prepared a state-ly banquet with musick, masques, and dancing, for the entertainment of the young ladies of Coventry; to which I, not knowing his design, went ignorantly; when he, leading me a dance, he took an opportunity, when it was ended, to draw me aside to the window, and fetching a deep sigh, he began in a low and passionate tone, to pour out his amorous expressions in my ears, urging what treasures and great felicities should be mine, if I would condescend to love him, and suffer him to enjoy me. At this unexpected discourse I blushed, and started, saying—"Is this, Sir, the entertainment you designed to ladies, to lay snares for their honour and chastity, by inviting them to your house? Alas! what love can you require of me, unless it be that which is dishonest, seeing I am already married, and have vowed my entire affections to my true Lord, never to place them any where else? And sure a noble mind cannot condescend so low, as to wish a stain on virtue!" I perceived by the often changing of his countenance, this answer was nothing pleasing to him; but, as he was going to reply, some of the ladies came near to entreat us to make up a new set-dance, which

which hindered him from saying what he further intended, and gave me an opportunity to disintangle myself at that time; so, excusing myself from dancing, by reason of a sudden illness I pretended, I went to my own apartment, much vexed and troubled in mind at what I had discovered, and took all occasions possible for the future, to shun his company, thinking his lawless passion, by absence, might expire. But on the contrary, feeding himself with hopes, he continued to feed his flame with fresh fuel; and finding all his amorous letters and rich presents rejected by me, he resolved on a desperate course, and about the cool of the evening, the known time I used to walk in my garden, he being got in over a high wall, by the means of a rope ladder, hid himself under a tuft of rose trees; and as I came into that solitary place his eyes all flaming, and his heart enraged with lust, he seized me by the trembling arm, and forced me to sit down on a bed of violets, saying—

“ Fair Sabra, it is now in my power to force that from you which you have hitherto denied me; yet I had rather it should proceed from your free grant and loving compliance. Your wandering knight is by this time no doubt dead, or at least never intends to return to you any more; therefore, by fairly yielding, you will become mistress of me, and all my large possessions; but if you refuse, I will force you on this place; and to prevent your telling stories, or writing to discover what is done,

will cut out your tongue, and lop off your hands, after I have had my will of you."

Seeing him thus resolute and bloody minded, and my desire being that he would kill me, rather than spot my honour, but finding I could not prevail with him so to do, I began to seem of a sudden more kind, and desired an hour's time to consider of it, and frame myself to comply with him. This he granted, but not that I should stir from him till he accomplished his desires; whereupon, he unadvisedly laying his head in my lap, through the fumes of wine he had drank that day, and the charms of my tuneful voice, he fell asleep, when, drawing out his dagger, and finding no other means to escape with my chastity, I gave him the fatal blow which ended his life in a minute, and for which I was seized, and had suffered death in the manner as you saw, had not kind Providence sent you in a happy time to work my deliverance."

She had no sooner finished her story, but the noble Champion embraced her, giving her many tender kisses, and highly commended her for her constancy and courage.

By this time, they espied an old hermit, who wandered from his cave to gather wild fruit for his subsistence, to whom St. George addressed himself, intreating he would direct him the ready way to Persia; who told him, that he was much out of his way, but that it was a deal further to go back again than to pass over the mountains he saw at a distance on his right-hand,

hand, though he would meet with some difficulty in doing it, and then entering into the confines of the Amazonian country, when he had passed that, the way was strait before him to Tauris, and from thence he might easily go into any part of the Persian dominions: hereupon, he and Sabra mounted, and rode to the mountains of Amanus, over which, by clambering mighty rocks, they passed the top of those mountains, which by reason of their great height, were covered, summer and winter, with ice and snow.

Having passed this difficulty, they descended into a spacious plain country; but in it they could see no people: the houses were deserted, and the trees every where blasted, and the fruits of the earth, which had to appearance been much, lay scattered, or spoiled by fire. This made the Champion and his fair Lady wonder who, or what it should be, that had wrought such desolation; the which, whilst it lasted, casting up their eyes, they saw a stately pavilion at a distance, erected before the gates of a beautiful tower or palace; so thither they rode, in hopes to find in it some living creatures, of whom they might enquire further of the matter, as likewise of their way.

This pavilion, coming nearer to it, they perceived to be exceeding rich and beautiful, all of green and crimson, wrought with silk, gold, and pearl, by Indian maids. When entering, they perceived a beautiful virgin clad in purple embroidered robes, with a golden crown

on her head, glittering with precious stones; in her hand she had a silver bow, and at her side hung, in a violet coloured scarf, a quiver of arrows pointed with gold, and round about her chair stood divers tall and beautiful virgins, in the like attire, but not so rich, and without crowns on their heads, she representing Diana, the Goddess of Chastity, in the midst of her beauteous nymphs; yet a silent sorrow appeared on every brow, as if some great misfortune had befallen them; which made St. George address himself to her, who, by the ensigns of majesty she wore, he could not but take to be the chief, saying—



Most incomparable Lady, pardon my presumption, for intruding as a forbidden guest into this stately pavilion; and grant, if it may
suit

suit with your good liking to me, that knowledge why you are thus sad, and what ill-hap has befallen this country; and I promise, by the dignities of my knighthood, to right you, on those that have done you wrong, all that lies in my power; for though here I appear as a single person, yet I have armies at command, if my own force should fail me in the enterprise."

To this, bowing over her scepter, with a modest and graceful countenance, she thus replied—

' Courteous Knight, I thank you for this kind offer; but fear what has occasioned my sorrow is beyond your power to redress; yet, not to appear discourteous in refusing you the knowledge of it, know my mother dying some years since, I succeeded her as Queen of the Amazons, at which time a Necromancer happened to arrive in my country, who casting his eyes on my beauty, and knowing my degree so far above him, he thought his open courtship would be utterly rejected, as knowing I had denied the important suits of kings, and resolving to live a spotless virgin; wherefore, he worked under-hand, by charms and enchantments, so that he doubted not this way to prevail; but by virtue of a ring I wear on my finger his enchantments had no power over me; which he perceiving, his love, or rather lust, was turned into mortal hatred and revenge: so that, by his magic spells, raising a castle out of the earth, he placed infernal spirits in it, to

cast noisome fogs and vapours, mixed with hail and fire, to the utmost borders of my country, to destroy all that was pleasant in it; which, through famine and pestilence, has rendered thus desolate."

"Where is this castle?" said the champion; "it may be I may be ordained to fling such vengeance on his head, as may make him too sadly repent the mischief he has done."

"Alas!" said the sorrowful Queen, "it is not in the power of any knight to do it; for though he is now absent, assisting the Persian Soldan against the Christian armies, with legions of his infernal crew, yet he has left, as his substitute, a giant of mighty stature, who has, by mighty strength, overcome whole bands of knights that have tried the adventure, and made them captives in miserable dungeons, within the walls of the castle, which is surrounded with thick darkness, many miles before any one can come at it."

"No matter for that," said the undaunted courageous champion, "with your permission I will venture my life and honour for the sake of you and your country, in finishing this enchantment."

The Amazonian Queen no sooner heard him express this gallantry, with an undaunted countenance, but she applauded his magnanimous generosity, and promised, that she and her ladies, in the mean while, would pray to the immortal Powers for his prosperous success. Whereupon, recommending Sabra (who
was

was sad at his departure) to their care, till his return, he mounted his stately steed, and rode as he was directed by the Amazonian Queen, towards the dreadful place, encompassed with darkness, and enclosing many ghastly terrors.



C H A P. XIII.

How St. George, undertaking to destroy the enchanted Castle of Olmond, overcame a mighty Giant, finished the Incantment, and restored the Country of the Amazons—How Seven Virgins were ravished and slain in a Wood, &c.



THE noble Champion no sooner entered the dark mist that spread round the castle for many miles, but he heard a horrible hissing

hissing of snakes, who suddenly assaulted him; against whom, whilst he defended himself with his trusty sword, (cutting and mangling them so dreadfully, that their yet moving pieces, like rushes, strewed all the place) he was assaulted with great birds, beetles, hornets, and other offensive creatures, brought thither by enchantment, who very much annoyed and grievously stung both him and his horse: however, with an undaunted mind, he forced on his way, till he came to a black river, inclosed with high banks, the water to appearance being full of crocodiles and allegators: over this there was but one narrow bridge to pass, defended by a mighty giant, with a strong mace of steel, between whom and the champion began a cruel fight; but at last the giant, growing weary with the infinite sweat that flowed from him, gave back, whereupon the noble Champion, redoubling his blows, struck him so furiously on the unwarded forehead, that he felled him to the ground, and stood over him, ready to strike off his monstrous head, when, with a voice like thunder, he cried out for mercy, promising, if he would spare his life, to be the Knight's servant, and faithful to him all his days: whereupon, St. George, on condition of his discovering to him the manner of the enchantment, that he might finish it, consented to give him his life, and take him for his servant.

Then

Then he told him, that in a cave within, as soon as he descended the front stairs of the castle, he would find a fire springing out of the earth by magic, which had occasioned all the mischief in the Amazonian land; and that it could only be quenched by a fountain of black water a little distant, the which was guarded by many ugly spirits; and then upon it's being extinguished, the enchantment would cease.

Hereupon, the valiant Knight, leaving the giant to hold his horse, entered down a pair of dark stairs, where he felt terrible blows, and heard lamentable cries, but could see nothing: at last, there came out, upon the breaking open a door, so much smoke and heat, that he was near being stifled; yet at last it cleared up a little, and he beheld a fire sprouting out of the earth, from whence proceeded the dismal vapours, thunder, and lightning, that had annoyed and wasted the country.

Approaching this flame, he found it was guarded by divers fiends and hellish spirits, through whose threatening fury he passed to the fountain he perceived a little beyond it, when in his shield (notwithstanding the resistance that was made by whirlwinds and flashes of flame) he took up as much water as it would hold, which he cast into the fire, whereupon the castle vanished with much thunder and lightning, terrible noise and cries, succeeded by a violent earthquake, whereupon the sky cleared up, and the sun shone bright.

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The enchantment by this means being finished, St. George, with the giant, went to the Amazonian pavilion, where he was welcomed by the Queen and her Ladies, with all possible demonstrations of joy; but especially by the fair Sabra, who had all the while prayed to Heaven for his protection, victory, and safe return; so that, for several days, feasting and musick continued: but an unhappy accident fell out, which abated much of the mirth, before the appointed days were ended.

It happened that Sabra, whilst her Lord took his repose, after his weary and hazardous adventure, with seven of the Queen's ladies, went to take the evening air, which the giant



(who lay without the pavilion, and had never seen such beauties before) perceiving, secretly followed

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followed them into a retired grove, and burning with lust to enjoy such rare creatures, hid himself there behind a thicket, and seized by surprise the seven ladies who were foremost, bound them with withs of woodbine, and ravished them; at the sight of which horrid fact, the trembling Sabra, whom he had not taken, by reason she was a pretty way from and undiscovered by him, hid herself behind a mulberry tree; and now, fearing this villainy should be discovered, he murdered the poor ladies, by beating out their brains against an oak tree, and throwing them into a pit, covered their dead bodies with stones and earth.

After this great wickedness, by his strong scent he discovered where Sabra lay hid; but she, by this time, to secure her chastity, had poisoned her fair face with a bottle of infection, which, ever since her last extremity, she kept about her to the end of her life, for the preservation of her honour, if need urged it, that she looked so leprous and deformed a creature in his eyes, as made him loathe her sight, and take her for a worse monster than himself, so that he left her, and ranged up and down the country, not so much stung by guilt, as he feared the revenge of the English Champion, when his foul act should come to be known; till at last, to prevent the punishment, he desperately threw himself from an adjacent rock, and dashed, in that fall, his monstrous body to pieces, and so ended his wicked and detested life.

St. George having notice his lady was gone abroad, and that she returned not in a seasonable hour, suspected some mishap was befallen her, and the ladies that accompanied her; especially the giant being likewise missing, so that taking his trusty sword, he ranged the woods, till, by her sighs and lamentations, he found her out, but so deformed, that had it not been for her voice, he could not have known her, and having enquired into the misfortune of her being reduced to this misery, and not far distant, finding the pit where the dead bodies of the ladies were buried in, he vowed the most cruel revenge in the world upon the giant; but searching to find him out, he saw he had prevented him, by being his own executioner.

Whereupon, with his sorrowful lady, he returned, with great grief, to the Amazonian pavilion, where the sight of the deformed Sabra, and the relation of what had further happened, so grieved the fair Queen, that she sunk from her chair of state, into a deadly swoon; yet in a little time being recovered, she bewailed the misfortune of her dear companions, and more, that of the fair Sabra, endeavouring, by medicines and art, to recover her beauty, which succeeded so well, that in a few days she was restored to her charming lustre.



C H A P. XIV.

How travelling through a Wilderness, Sabra fell in Labour, and was delivered of three fair Sons—How, in St. George's Absence, they were carried away by wild Beasts, and by what Means recover'd—How they were crown'd in Egypt, King and Queen; and what happened to the Christian Army in Persia, &c.



ST. George having restored the Amazonian Queen to the quiet possession of her country, by dissolving the enchantment, began to cast in his mind to what purpose he departed from England, which was to assist his fellow champions against the Persian Soldan, whom he supposed

supposed by this time fighting in his quarrel; so that, taking leave of the Queen, who parted not with him and his lady without tears, he rode through many desarts and wildernesses full of fearful wild beasts, till at length he was forced to take his lady from her palfry, by reason of the exceeding pain that afflicted her, occasioned by the swelling burden of her womb, being ripe for delivery, which so encreased upon her, that instead of a rich pavilion, or a stately alcove in a palace, she was forced to take up under a spreading beech, on a bed of moss, her curtains being the spreading flowers that grew round about it, and her canopy the spreading branches of the tree: but whilst St. George hastened to seek for some female assistance, to help her in her great extremity, her cries wrought such compassion in the Queen of Fairies, to whom that grove was consecrated, that she came not only to help her in her delivery, which successfully happened, but brought her all necessities; so that, St. George in his fruitless return, wondered to find her safely delivered of three fair sons, placed in three rich cradles, and she laid on a princely embroidered bed, with curtains of Persian silk, and a crimson canopy over it: but having heard the story, he lifted up his hands to Heaven, and returned immortal thanks for such a providence.

Food now being the only thing that was wanting, after he had kissed his lady and tender infants, he went in search of it; but in his absence great woe befel, a lioness, a tygress, and

and wolf came and took the sweet babes out of the cradle, the mother's strength little availing to rescue them, and her piteous cries less, so that, without hurting them, they bore them away with a mighty swift pace.

St. George returning with venison, and some wild fowl he had taken, was much amazed when he saw his lady all in tears, and the infants gone; yet, no sooner he knew by what means they were conveyed away, but throwing down his provision, he hastened in search of them, vowing either to recover them, or to lose his own life. A long time he wandered about the woods and mountains; till at last, by one of their cries, he was directed to them in a cave, at the bottom of a rock, where he found them suckling like Romulus and Rhemus, at the teats of the before named furious wild beasts, from whence he took them without any interruption, they fawning at his feet, and in a token of kindness, attended him to the place where Sabra lay, and then returned to their respective dens.

Sabra was exceedingly transported with joy, when she saw her children recovered; so that, getting so much strength as to sit on horseback, they went to the sea side, took shipping, and by reason of her weakness, and his babes yet undisposed of, he thought it not yet fit to go unto Persia, but directed his course for Egypt, and was there waited on by the twelve Peers at his landing, and most magnificently entertained with all imaginable demonstrations of joy; and

and such royal preparations made for the crowning them King and Queen of Egypt, that the like had never been seen in that land before: and so rich were the presents of gold, silver, pearls, silks, and precious stones, given at the coronation, by the Nobles, Ladies, and Merchants, that they were sufficient to purchase a petty kingdom.

The other six Champions with their army, by this time had wasted a great part of the Persian Soldan's dominions, enriching themselves with the spoils of a hundred towns and cities; and in a great battle, which lasted five days, and in which two hundred thousand of the Pagans were slain, they gained a mighty victory, insomuch that the Soldan, fearing such another encounter might be the ruin of himself and his whole army, he drew his scattered forces within the walls of his grand city of Belgor, and fortified it with all diligence in the best and strongest manner. Yet he had not long rested, ere the Christian army encompassed it, and battered the wall with furious rams in divers places, which made them to tremble and rend, so that the Soldan, fearing they would enter, went in great haste to Osmond, the necromancer, who had done so much mischief to the Amazonians, and whose enchanted tower or castle was frustrated by the valour of the English Champion, and entreated him, seeing human force availed not, that by his art and magic he would assist him.

This

This Osmond promised to do, if he would fall out the next day with all his power; so, when the two armies were engaged in a bloody conflict, he went into a dark valley, and with



his magic wand making a circle, and his strange character, muttering horrid charms, immediately the sky was covered with blackness, the clouds were shivered with mighty thundering and lightning, and fire run on the ground, when immediately a pitchy cloud descended in the front of the Christian army, which opening there, issued out a legion of infernal spirits, with horrid cries, who overthrew, in many places, men and horses; likewise, with the blasts of fire that proceeded out of their mouths, they scorched and miserably burned others, tossing some up in the air, who were bruised

bruised to death in the fall. But the great banner of the cross was no sooner displayed, but they all vanished: and then the Christians taking new courage, slew so many of their enemies, that the fields of Mavors, whereon they fought, was puddled over with blood, and piled up with heaps of dead bodies.

St. George having restored things to what they were at first, exhorted his soldiers to a general assault on the city, which they the next morning stormed in ten several places, making the street float with blood, and so breaking into the palace, took the Soldan and his Vice-roys, or Governors of kingdoms under him, prisoners. These six, upon paying great ransoms, were set at liberty; but the Soldan, refusing to turn Christian, and blaspheming the God of Heaven, was cast into the dungeon, wherein he had imprisoned St. George seven years; where, making a piteous complaint, and cursing his stars, he ended his miserable life, by beating out his brains against a stone pillar. Then, by general consent, St. George was proclaimed Emperor; but soon after returned with the other Champions for England, and was received with more joy than can be here expressed.



THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS
H I S T O R Y
OF THE
S E V E N
FAMOUS CHAMPION
OF
CHRISTENDOM.

PART II.

CHAP. I.

How St. George and the other Champions arrived in England, and sent for Sabra and his three Sons—How by a Fall in a Hunting-match she came by her Death—The Manner of her Burial and Tomb—How the Seven Champions vowed a Pilgrimage, and how the three young Princes were warned by their Mother's Ghost to follow them, and of the Rescue they brought to a Lady.

THE Seven Champions, after overcoming a terrible storm at sea, and destroying several pirates that set upon them in hopes of a rich

rich prize, safely landed in England, where they were received with great expressions of joy, especially in the famous City of London, where they held their residence; and during the time of the feasts and triumphs were made in honour of them, St. George, being mindful of the dear pledges of his love, sent divers gallant knights into Egypt, to attend his beautiful Sabra into his native country; writing letters to the Emperor of Rome, and the two Kings, who had his sons in tuition, to send them to him; they being by this time grown to years of maturity, all of them happily arrived together, and received a welcome beyond expression.

When, among other princely sports, a solemn hunting was appointed in the spacious forest, which then stood where Barnet now stands: the fair Sabra, willing to see the activity and noble courage of her sons in that princely sport, resolved to accompany her Lord, mounted with her silver bow, quiver, and breast-plate, like Diana on a fiery Spanish gennet.

They no sooner entered the forest, but three drops of blood fell from St. George's nose, and a flock of croaking ravens flew round him. These signs much perplexed him, as having always been the fore-runners of some danger to him. Yet, a stately stag being roused, they following of the chase, somewhat diverted his melancholy thoughts; but, alas! this pastime was soon turned into mourning, for fair Sabra

straining her horse to keep pace with the foremost, he startled suddenly upon the turn of the stag, and threw her with a violent force into a prickly brake full of deadly sharp thorns, which so rent and tore her snow-white skin in every part, that it was changed into a crimson, so that the blood gushing out amain, notwithstanding all that her Lord and the rest could do, she found, through the bruise she had received, and the loss of blood, she had not long to live; wherefore, tenderly kissing him who stood over her, all bedewed in tears, and embracing her sons, she gave them her blessing; charging them to follow their father's steps in honourable and virtuous ways, succouring the oppressed and chastizing tyrants; not to injure orphans or widows, nor wrong the chastity of damsels: after which, fetching a deep sigh, she sunk down in the arms of her husband, pale Death cruelly closing the eyes of the fairest creature that ever breathed on earth in endless slumber; whose unfortunate end turned the joy of the whole land into deep sorrow and mourning. Her funeral was celebrated with all the solemn pomp imaginable, and a stately tomb raised over her, on which were various curious devices engraven, resembling her chastity, constancy, beauty, and all the ornaments of her graces and virtues. Her sons making this epitaph on her, hanging it over her sleeping image, engraved on a tablet of silver, set with precious stones—

Reader,

Reader, pass not, but let thy tears be shed
Over the beauteous and the virtuous dead:
Loyal and chaste she was, and all her life
Did pattern out a kind and loving wife.
By the hard Destinies her doom was wrought,
A cruel fall her sad destruction brought.

Yet though her body lies in this cold tomb,
The earth's too scanty for her soul's vast doom;
It's wing'd for heaven, and took a hasty flight,
For crowns of blessings in the realms of light:
However, weep, since Death has taken more
Than Nature to the world can e'er restore.

After the funeral solemnities were over, St. George vowed to go a pilgrimage to Jerusalem barefooted in poor attire, to view the Holy sepulchre, and other things highly in esteem with Christian Pilgrims, so to expiate for his sins, and appease the ghost of his departed lady, by whose unlucky hunting-match she had lost her life. This resolution being made known to the other six Champions, they, for the love they bore him, resolved to accompany him in the same manner.

I must now return to the three young princes, sons to the noble English Champion, who were left at home to mourn over their mother's tomb. In this they so contended who should exceed each other in sorrow, that they fell at variance about it; yet at last agreed to try an experiment to conclude, which was, that he who could bring the rarest present, and present

it on her monument, should be worthily accounted chief mourner; whereupon, the eldest repaired to an inchantress that lived in a cave, in a wood some miles on the north of the city, who, for a great reward, though it was in the depth of winter, sent her spirit to fetch all manner of curious fragrant flowers that the earth could afford. These she made up into a crown like a garland, and so enchanted them that they should never fade, but be ever blooming and cast an odoriferous scent. The next in birth brought a silver lute, which he hanged so advantageously, that at every breathing of the wind the lute would tune melodiously without being touched with human hands. The third came attired in white silken robes, with a silver bason and a poniard in his hands, when opening his bosom, he pricked his tender flesh with the sharp pointed weapon, and let out thirty drops of his blood into the bason, which he offered on the tomb, as the dearest thing he could produce to express his affections to his dead mother; so that his two other brothers concluding he had got the glory from them, fell upon him to slay him; when immediately the tomb flew open, and their mother's ghost appeared, charging them to forbear, and live in unity as they tendered her soul's rest: also, that they should haste to the HOLY LAND to their father's rescue, who was there in great danger of his life; and so, immediately vanishing into the air, the tomb closed again.

They

They were then dismissed, to pursue their intended voyage, and sailing up the Straights they landed on the coast of Provence in France, where, travelling by the side of a large forest, they heard the lamentable cry of a distressed



virgin, which made them alight, and tying their horses to a beech tree, entered the woods with their drawn swords; wherein they had not far gone, but directed by the cry, which yet continued in a piteous manner, they beheld a beauteous virgin lying on her back, in an unseemly posture, and coming nearer, they perceived she was staked down to the ground by the hair of the head. The bashful young Knights, at this unusual sight began to retire, and cover their faces that overspread with

blushes: however, at last taking courage, they threw their scarfs of knighthood over the lady, to cover her nakedness, and enboud her with all the speed they could, by reason that through an extraordinary sense of modesty, she fainted at the sight of them.

Being come to herself, she thus began—
“Worthy Christian Knights, for so by the bloody crosses you wear on your shields, I esteem you to be, I return you a thousand thanks for the timely rescue you brought to save my chastity, when I was at the point of being ravished by three deformed Moors, who dragged me from my aged father's little mansion, not far from hence, where I fear he will expire before I can return to let him see I am in safety.”

This she no sooner said, but the Knights demanded which way the villains went, that they might destroy them; and being directed, Alexander stayed with her as her guard, whilst the others pursued the Moors; and in the mean time, sitting on a mossy bank, she told him she was daughter to the Duke of Normandy whose country the French King had taken from him; so that, wandering as exiles, they had built a little hut in that forest, and covered it with turf, living on wild fruits, roots, &c. till Providence should better order their affairs; and that in such their low estate they had lived in peace and sweet content, till these Moors unluckily found out their abode. By this time, the two young Princes, who went in search,
came

came with the heads of the Moors, having taken them off their cowardly bodies, where they found them close hid in a thicket, almost dead for fear.

This being done, they recommended her to the care of Heaven, and prosecuted their way to Jerusalem; so I leave them, to enquire after the Seven Champions that had been gone long before to view the HOLY LAND.

ES

CHAP.

C H A P. II.

How the Seven Champions tried the Adventure of the Golden Fountain—How St. George killed a mighty Giant, and released the Six that were taken Prisoners—Of their Arrival at the Holy Sepulchre, and how they were warned by a Voice to depart—How, being almost famished, St. George relieved them, by killing a Giant in Arabia, &c.



THE Seven Champions, after many a weary step, arrived within the confines of the flourishing City of Damascus, where,
it

it growing towards evening, and they perceiving on a spacious plain, a little aside them, a very stately building, went thither; being still clad in palmers weeds, to enquire for entertainment till the morning. Upon their approach, they found the gates open, and all things appearing very stately and magnificent, which caused them to ring a little silver bell, at the sound of which a grave person came and welcomed them; and having refreshed them with provisions, and comforted their hearts with Persian wine, he led them to see the stateliness of his mansion, which seemed more liker a paradise than a private man's habitation, being adorned in a superb manner, which highly pleased them, and made them enquire by what artist they were done, which made him fetch a deep sigh, saying—

“ I once had many sons, who were curiously skilled in all rare workmanship that ingenuity could reach to, or ingenious minds comprize, but fourteen of them have I unfortunately lost, six of the youngest only remaining with me.”

Whereupon he called them, who came playing on their silver lutes, which ravished the Champions with delight; and they earnestly enquired by what means he lost the rest: whereupon he thus began—

“ It so happened that I, being skilled in Alchymy, discovered, some miles from hence, a mineral water, which would turn any base metal steeped therein into gold and silver: this I

made into a curious fountain, and kept the virtue of it private as long as I could; but at last, by what means I am ignorant, the important secret coming to be known, many knights and others in arms, came to dispossess me of it; but my valiant sons so nobly defended it, that they put them frequently to the foil, and by their courage maintained my right; till at last a mighty giant, whose skin no cart can pierce, came from his cave, in Arabia, and by his matchless force, after a long combat, took my sons prisoners, and seized my castle; whereupon I fled to this place which I had before built, and my children lie in a dungeon under the castle, in heavy chains, where they must continue till some good knights, by destroying the giant, delivers them."

This discourse moved the noble warriors to ease his grief, and confiding in him to keep secret, they freely discovered themselves, which made him fall on his knees, and embrace them; whereupon, he led them to his armoury, which was rarely furnished with warlike habiliments, out of which every one chose what he liked best; but because there was but a single giant to contend with, that the fame of him that should be victor might rise the higher, they resolved to cast lots: the first lot fell upon St. Dennis, who was made prisoner by the giant, as were five more of them; but the reason they feared so ill was, that the giant's skin was not penetrable by the sword.

These

These misfortunes grieved St. George, who was to try the last adventure; whereupon, he took an iron bar, sharp at one end as a pike, and went towards the giant; and after a bloody combat, brought him to the ground with a dismal roar: and leaving him there expiring, he went into the castle and set the prisoners at liberty, to the great joy of the sorrowful aged man, when he saw his sons, whom he gave over for lost, return in safety: whereupon, he feasted them in a sumptuous manner, and then, bestowing on them many gifts, he dismissed them, and they proceeded on their journey till



they came to fair Jerusalem, without encountering any considerable adventure.

Whilst

Whilst they were kneeling in the sepulchre,
they heard this in a curious sounding musical
note—

Rise, noble Champions, linger here no more,
Your arms the world requires, depart therefore,
And with your valours and the Christian cause;
The time of noble actions now near draws,
By mighty deeds endless to crown your name,
And write your works in golden characters of
fame :—

And you, chaste virgins, that do here reside,
Horses and armour must for them provide.

This was no sooner over, but a sound as of
heavenly musick ensued; the virgins led them
to a place in the side of the mountain, where
they found armour and horses; upon which
they took their leave of the fair virgins, and
being armed at all points, mounted and rode
out of the city, in search of new adventures:
but passing through the wildernesses of Arabia,
and not happening on any town, village, or
single house, they began to faint with hunger,
and wish that instead of silver and gold they
had brought provisions, as the more useful in
this extremity; so that they began to make
complaints upon account of the war that fa-
mine made against them; till at last they
alighted in the evening, where they had but an
ill resting under a tree. The next morning
they mounted very feeble on their horses, and
fol-

followed the nearest road to a smoke they saw on the side of a great mountain, resolving to be a guest there whether welcome or not: so that St. George, who bore this affliction better than the rest, rode a pretty way before them,



to be their purveyor; yet he no sooner came up to demand succour, but out of a huge cave issued a terrible giant, but in such haste that he left his massy bar of iron behind him, and seeing but one armed knight, he little regarded to fetch it, thinking to crush him to pieces in his arms; but St. George seeing the giant come at him with great fury, lifting himself on his stirrups, and nimbly tracing his horse aside, smote him with his battle axe so full on the crown, that he clove his huge thick scull, and, shaking the earth with his fall, he gave up the ghost

ghost. By this time, the other Champions were come up, so refreshing themselves with what they found in the cave, and having delivered divers captives of either sex out of slavery, and given them, as a recompense, all that belonged to the giant, and a peaceable possession of the place, they departed in search of other adventures.



CHAP.

C H A P. III.

How the Seven Champions met with a Crystal Shrine, in which was inclosed a murdered Lady, laid in a sable Tent—how they heard the woful story of a grave old Man, vowing Revenge, went to the black Inchanted Castle, where they, by stratagem, were imprisoned in a Dungeon.



THE Champions, leaving the Giant's cave, passed over the mountains in a fair plain, strewed with some towns, and many pretty villages; and far they had not passed on these flowery downs, before they espied a pavilion, whereupon, desirous to be better instructed

structed in the ways of the country, they rode up to it, and found there an old reverend man sitting in a melancholy posture over a crystal shrine, wherein was the body of a dead virgin much mangled. This doleful sight struck them with wonder; whereupon, alighting from their horses, they resolved to enquire into the cause of what appeared to them a mystery.

The reverend old man, after a flood of tears, thus began—"I am lord of all these plains, and Providence has so blessed my industry, that I have large possessions; but, above all, I was happy in two beautiful daughters, who now, by cruel means, are dead; and here you see one of them lie murdered before your eyes."

Upon this, the Champions entreated him to give a relation of her tragedy, which should be revenged at full on those barbarians.

"To that end," said he, "have I continued here for many weeks. There resides, not far from hence, one Leoger, a man of a lustful and wicked temper; who, falling in love with my eldest daughter, married her: but, having reaped the pleasures of love, his mind was changeable, and casting his eyes on my youngest daughter, he invited her in a kind manner to visit her sister after her lying-in. By the way he carried her into a wood, and told her the story of his passion: but she detesting him, he tied her to a tree, and in an inhuman manner forced her chastity, and then strangled her. These passages her little Page saw from behind a thicket, but durst not cry out, for fear of
being

being murdered: but Leoger was no sooner departed, but he ran to my married daughter and told her all the circumstances, who was so overcome with horror, that coming into her husband's chamber, where he had thrown himself on his bed, she made at him with a dagger to kill him, but missing her blow, she stabbed her tender infant, and then herself. Soon after this



killing news, I fetched my younger daughter's body, and have inshrined it as you see."

At this sad relation, the Champions were greatly incensed, and departed to work their revenge on the Knight of the Black Castle; and riding about ten leagues, came in sight of it: but the access to it was very difficult.

This

This Knight moreover doubting revenge would be sought, had not only got in a strong guard, but leagued with a Necromancer, to tortify his castle by magic-art.

However, they resolved to make their passage against all opponents; but scarcely were they entered, when a mighty darkness made them scarce know where they were; yet, going down a great pair of stairs, the dark cloud vanished, when they could plainly see the treacherous Knight with his Necromancer, and divers mighty giants, whom they challenged to fight in the court-yard, with brands of cowards, and many reproachful words, especially to Leoger, which he answered with a threaten-



ing reply, sending down twelve giants to kill them; so that between them happened a dreadful

ful combat: but such was the Knights good luck, that the giants were all slain or disabled, which made Leoger storm exceedingly. Whereupon he fell to his conjuration, and framed an airy spirit in the shape of a beautiful woman, who leaning in a melancholy posture on her hand, within an iron grate, seemed to make great lamentations; but when they approached to demand the cause of her sorrow, she drew back, and another appeared tall and majestic; but whilst they were admiring what stately dame it should be, they received several blows, when turning to see from whom they came, they perceived the appearance of five or six knights running into the castle, at a little wicket, where thinking to revenge their cowardice, the Champions pursued in great haste, but no sooner entered, ere they fell through a trap-door, into a dungeon, paved with dead mens bones, where we must leave them for a time, and return to St. George's three sons, who came in search of him.



THE
HISTORY
OF
St. GEORGE's Three SONS,
Guy, David, and Alexander.

PART III.

CHAP. I.

How St. George's Sons, going in Quest of him and the other Champions, arrived in Sicily, and destroyed a Monster—How they discomfited an Army of Thracians, and took their King Prisoner, killing two Giants, and releasing the King of Thessaly out of the enchanted Castle, and breaking the Inchantment the Castle instantly vanished.

IN pursuance of their design, St. George's three sons resolved to pursue knightly adventures in foreign lands, and to find out their father and the rest; and being furnished with
all

all necessaries for their voyage, they went on board a Sicilian vessel, and arrived at that famous island; and travelling up the country they found a great number of towns without man, woman, or child in them. They chose to take their lodging in the open fields, having the green earth for their bed. The morning approaching, they were surprized with an horrible noise, which made the young knights buckle on their armour, and stand in their own defence. Soon after, they perceived a deformed monster approach them, and the earth seemed to tremble with his weight.

These three valiant knights were nothing appalled at this horrible sight. Sir Guy, the



eldest, first approached, but the monster raising himself on a sudden, seized upon the arm of
Guy

Guy with his dreadful claws, so that the knight could hardly have disengaged himself had not his brother Sir Dávid suddenly come into his rescue; Sir Alexander at the same time, gave such a terrible blow on the head of the monster, that it made him stagger, but at the same instant, so entangled himself in the legs of Sir Alexander's horse, that he threw his master on the ground, which the monster observing, was just ready to fall upon him, had not the valiant Sir David prevented it, by a furious blow on the breast, that he fell backward; upon which Sir Guy dismounting, thrust his sword down the monster's throat, which made him send forth a most hideous cry like thunder; but having received his death's wound, in a short time he expired.

These young Champions proceeded farther into the country, in hopes to meet with some of those inhabitants who had deserted their houses for fear of this monster, and to get some refreshment after their encounter, and at length came to a lonesome valley, where they perceived a smoke to issue out of a cave, and approaching thereto, an aged hermit appeared clothed in a long garment, and his meagre countenance discovering a mind overwhelmed with grief. The Knights saluted him, and desired him to give them an account how the country they had passed through was destitute of people. The hermit then gave them the following relation—

“ Be it known unto you that the country is called Sicily, and formerly was counted the granary of the world, but now our streets are abandoned and destitute of people, owing to a dreadful monster who lives both in water and upon land: he was perceived by some of our herdsmen, who saw him sporting upon the waves of the sea, and spying them, made instantly to the shore, upon which, they betook themselves to flight; but their haste could not secure them, for the monster overtook and seized upon some of the hindmost of them, whom he soon swallowed up, and finding the sweetness of human flesh, he hath destroyed near five hundred of persons. The people call him Mongo, and have left their lands on his account, there being no champion so valiant as to assault him; so that he ruins all the island without opposition. Thus, most courageous Knights, you have the cause of the desolation, from which we have no hopes of deliverance, till some valiant knights shall undertake this adventure.”

The eldest son of St. George answered thus: “ Father, if this be the cause of all your sorrow, to ease you, I assure you that, by the victorious arms of me and my two brothers, this monster is slain.”

“ What thanks,” said the hermit, “ we render to Heaven and you, for your unmatched manhood and fortunate success!”

As they were thus discoursing, an Herald at Arms, attended with four knights in mourning, passed by, who was sent by the King to



proclaim, in all foreign realms, That if any knight would encounter with this monster, he should be made a Peer of the kingdom, as a recompense. The three young Champions told him, that his search was at an end, for Mongo was destroyed; and one of the knights returning with these tidings to the King, the rest went to view the carcass of this horrid creature, and the Champions were invited to wait upon the King at Syracuse, so taking leave of the hermit they proceeded toward the city.

“ They

They were met by the King, who took them into his coach, and entered triumphantly into the palace, where they were received with all demonstrations of kindness; and the King appointed a great dancing, and all things were managed with great mirth and contentment.

The night being far spent they retired to their beds, but no sooner did the glowing East display her colours, when the shrill noise of a trumpet raised them from their slumbers, to know the meaning of it, and were soon acquainted, that it was a Thessalian Knight, who came with a message to the Sicilian King, and informed his Majesty, that his coming thither was to implore his assistance in behalf of the distressed country of Theffaly, oppressed by the tyranny of the King of Thrace, who desired of the King of Theffaly that he might marry Cornelia his only daughter; but both she and her father rejecting his request, he resolved to obtain by force what he could not procure by favour, and instantly raised an army which we could not oppose. The King thinking himself secure by the league they had entered into, so that the Theffalian troops soon over-run a great part of the country, and destroyed all before them. The King of Theffaly raised all the strength he was able against this perjured conqueror, who had a giant of a terrible stature, whose name was Codro; and the King of Theffaly running against him with his lance, it shivered into a thousand pieces, nor could his sword avail him against the gi-

ant's armour, and he was conveyed by the giant into his castle, which is very strong, and the Thessalians much doubt whether they shall ever recover their King. After this victory, the



King of Thrace marched with his army to the City of Larissa, which he has so straightly besieged, that without speedy aid it is in danger to be lost. Our Nobles and Commons do therefore humbly beg your Majesty's assistance, to save their bleeding country from destruction.

This

This lamentable complaint raised pity in all that heard it, especially in our three English heroes, who with the assistance of the King of Sicily, speedily raised an army, and with undaunted courage undertook this perilous adventure.

The captains and officers made such an expedition, that in twenty days they mustered twenty thousand men, who were completely armed out of the royal armoury. To the three brothers the King gave each of them a silver helmet, as a reward for their conquering the monster Mongo. They then marched toward the City of Larissa, and Sir Alexander being sent before, to give the alarm to the Thracians.



about midnight came in sight of the town, and making a Galley out of one of the gates, fell

upon the enemy and destroyed multitudes of them, cutting down all before them, and came to the royal pavilion, where the King of Thrace was in person, asleep in his tent; but being awakened by the noise of the soldiers, he started up, but before he could put on his armour Alexander entered his tent, and took him prisoner.

The necromancer Codro, who lived with the giant Logos, knowing by his magic spells that the Thracian King's army had received a total overthrow, and himself taken prisoner, he acquainted the giant therewith, who thereupon, sending for his two brothers to come to his as-



sistance, Count Bruno, the King of Thrace's deputy, soon raised an army of 50,000 men, and the Sicilians and the Thessalians, being about

about 40,000, resolved to attack them, and both armies engaging, Sir David, who had the honour to lead the vanguard, assailed Count Bruno with such force that he run him quite through the body, so that he fell dead on the ground; whereupon, the Thracians gave back, but the two giants coming in with fresh forces, the combat began afresh, and Sir Guy gave the giant Godolpho such a blow on the head, that had not his helmet been of approved metal, he had cleft him down in the middle; but recovering, he lifted up his massy club, and missing Sir Guy, struck it so deep in the earth, that Sir Guy alighting from his horse, designed to cut off his head, when Kilmano, the other giant, coming to his assistance, was encountered by Sir David, who skilfully avoiding the strokes of the giant, he found he had a valiant enemy to deal with. Godolpho having recovered his last blow, came to join his brother Kilmano, whom Sir Guy undertook to engage.

While these four were busied in fighting, Sir Alexander made such havock among the Thracians, that they began to fly; and the two giants were hotly pursued by the three brothers, with the loss of a great number of men; but Logos, who kept the enchanted castle, came in with more forces, which the wearied Sicilians not being able to withstand, retired, and the Thracians secured themselves in the enchanted castle. The army having sufficiently refreshed themselves, marched up to the castle

gate, on the top of which stood two giants, with massy stones in their hands, to tumble on the heads of those that should attempt to scale the walls: but the Necromancer finding all his charms were at an end, would not suffer them to throw down the stones, in hope to find mercy from the conquerors. Sir Guy first entered the castle, but was soon encountered by a dreadful griffin, who was so briskly attacked



by the young Knight, that he deeply wounded him, and instantly a noise like thunder was heard out of the ground, and he apprehended some terrible encounter, but nothing following, Alexander proceeding farther in, a dreadful burning dragon came flying against him, which struck him with such violence that he could hardly

hardly stand on his legs; but having drawn his sword, the dragon soon vanished out of sight; but such a noise ensued that the very foundation of the castle shook. The undaunted Sir David, resolving to view all the avenues of the castle, his passage was stopped by an Hippotamus, or Sagitary, being half man and half horse, and there soon began a dreadful combat between them; but Sir David at length cutting off one of the monster's legs, the heavens seemed to be rent asunder by dreadful claps of thunder, and flashes of lightning, the earth quaked, and the terrible yells and groans of infernal spirits were heard, and all of a sudden the enchanted castle disappeared. The two giants fell down on their knees, begging for mercy, and the Necromancer was forced to surrender his cursed carcass to the conquerors, who cut off his head.

The three brothers then searched after the King of Thessaly, and having found him, entertained him with due respect, and conducted him to his own city of Larissa, where a general joy ran through the island. The brothers now took their leaves of the King and Princess, and travelled to find out their father and his Six Champions, where they met with very notable adventures, as you will find in the following chapter.

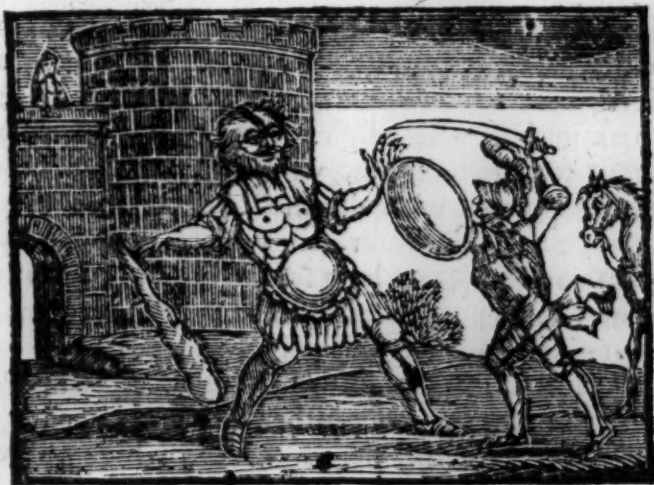
CHAP. II.

How St. George's three Sons found the Queen of Armenia dying, through the Treachery of the Knight of the Black Castle—how with her Daughter Rosana, they travelled thither, to revenge her Injury, and ended the Incantment.

THE three young Knights being still upon the enquiry, and hearing no news of their father, nor the other Champions, concluded some mishap had befallen; wherefore, coming to a black pavilion, which they found deserted, they tracked the feet from thence in the sand, with drops of blood, and scattered hair, till coming into a thicket, they heard a lady complain against the Knight of the Black Castle, whom they no sooner approached, but they understood she had been Queen of Armenia, and was banished for imprudently shaming herself, by yielding to the embraces of that false Knight. Though the young Knights heard her story, and comforted her all they could, yet having charged her daughter to sever revenge, and given her a letter to her ungrateful Knight, she breathed her last in such complaints, as drew tears from all their eyes; and after they had buried the Queen, and wrote a mournful epitaph on the rhind of a bay tree, they accompanied the young lady to the

the Black Castle, to revenge at full this great injury.

They no sooner approached it, but a monstrous satyr came against them with a mighty club, endeavouring to stop their passage; but



after a sharp encounter, deeply wounding him, he fled bellowing away; after which they arrived at the castle gate, when Rosana, espied her wicked father and the magician, looking over the battlements, contriving to prepare for their destruction, which she advertized them: however, they blew the trumpet, and immediately, as before, the drawbridge fell down, and the gates opened; then, without much disturbance, coming to a pillar of jasper, they found this inscription—

Whilst here seven fatal lamps burn bright,
This place can never yield to knight:
But they extinguish'd by a fountain near,
By her who does a rose on her breast bear,
The strange enchantment then will disappear. }

Having read this, they pursued a giant into a hall where the lamps were burning; and after a fierce combat, slew him; but in vain they tried to extinguish the magick, when they searched about for the fountain, which they found in a vault, covered with darkness. But when they approached the water, they were opposed by giants and furies, who gave them many furious blows, and put them back; so that Rosana, snatching up one of their shields, stepped to the fountain, and took off the waters, where-with she ran and extinguished the lamps. Cries and yells of hellish fiends ensued, which made the imprisoned Champions rouse, and instead of a dungeon they found themselves in a spacious parlour.

Leoger, finding his enchantment finished, secretly fled on a swift horse; and the conjuror took his way through the air in a chariot. The Knights embraced each other, and they feasted royally on the plenty they found in the castle, and at night betook themselves to repose, when St. George, lying alone in an inward chamber, was awakened with a doleful cry of—

O thou

O thou most valiant Knight, what dost thou here,
Where nought but horrid mischiefs do appear?

Upon this, looking about, he espied the shape of a beautiful woman in tears, who beckoned him to follow her, which he did, till he came through many lonely places, to a tomb, whereon he perceived a grave old man lie upon it tormented by flames, and in a desperate manner he lay roaring, not able to stir from the place. Whilst the Champion was wondering at this enchantment, the woman that had called him thither, came out of the tomb and besought him to strike three times on the tomb with his sword, and the enchantment would be dissolved, which he did, and immediately they were released from their torments.

The enchantment being ended, they all agreed to go with St. George to Babylon, except Rosana, who remembering her mother's commands, was resolved to go in search of her wicked father, and so arming herself like an Amazon Queen, with silver armour, a javeling in her hand, and a sword hanging by her side, she mounted on a gallant steed, presented her by St. George, and parting at the bridge, took their respective ways.



C H A P. III.

How Rosana went armed to seek her Fother, and of his miserable Death—The Combat she had with the Inchanter about his Armour, and how she killed herself—Of the further Adventures of the Champions, and how St. George fell in Love with a Nun, &c.



THE fair and sorrowful Rosana departing from them, rode through many a desert, when coming to a forest side, the sun being hot, she went among the heat of the trees, to shelter, and see if she could find a fountain for refreshment.

She had not far entered before her ears were saluted with complaints and lamentations; by the voice she thought it was Leoger, her father, and coming into his sight,

sight, without telling what relation she was to him, she gave him the Queen's letter, which he had no sooner read, but he cried out—"Injured Queen, whom I so basely wronged, at last thou art obeyed ;

And if our souls can meet, and know above,
I'll fold thee ever in my arms of love:
Whilst this atones for mischief I did here,
And sets my soul free to attend thee there.

Hereupon, he plunged his dagger into his breast. This caused so natural an affection in the lady, that she wept bitterly, labouring to stop his bleeding wound, and told him she was his daughter; when, casting his eyes on her, he bewailed her, being left in danger, and then yielded up his breath. When she came to herself, she took courage, and covered his dead body with moss, hanging up his armour in a pine tree, which she resolved to watch till some Knight should come and help her to convey her father's body to her mother's tomb. But being fatigued with long watching, the Necromancer, having wandered up and down, happened to come that way, and knowing the armour, reached it down, at which time Rosana waking, she drew her sword, and charged him to put it up again, which he refused, and a desperate combat ensued, so that the Necromancer received a violent blow on his head, and fell to the ground, begging mercy, which she granted, if he would carry her father's body to Armenia, and hang up the armour as a trophy over the grave.

This he consented to, and conveyed it thither immediately; but whilst he was busy in covering up the grave, Rosana fell upon her sword, and died on her parents repository.

This startled the Magician, and he put her in the same grave with her parents, erecting a monument with an epitaph; and so departing to a valley not far from thence, he raised a mausoleum, by magic, which he no sooner entered but it closed upon him, where we will leave him conversing with damned spirits.

Whilst

While these things happened, the Seven Champions arrived at Babylon with the King, who soon decided the quarrel among the Grandees, who should possess the crown, and he was restored. The Virgin that was enchanted with him, was married to one of the chief noblemen of the kingdom, and joy and feasting ensued; but all was dashed by their sudden departure: so travelling through many countries, they came to Constantinople, where preparations were made for royal sports and pastimes.

Here St. George won immortal fame, overthrowing man and horse, and all that came in his way; so that the fair Princess began to be much enamoured of him;



but the former contract being made by her own consent, modesty restrained her from expressing her passion. The Champions, being highly treated, left the Court, and at the request of St. Anthony, passed to Rome, where the Emperor received them with a cordial welcome, and gave them large presents. St. George viewing the city, among the Nuns, cast his eyes on Lucinda, the Emperor's daughter.

daughter, and understanding she had vowed perpetual virginity, was sorry he had seen her whom he could not enjoy; yet resolving to prosecute his love, thinking her mind might alter, and obtaining the dress of a grave matron of quality, got admittance into the monastery, with a basket of fruit for the Princess, which he carried to her chamber, where finding her alone, with humble submission he discovered who he was, and the passion he had for her.

At this the Princess startled, and coming to herself, told him, it was not in her power, her vow being passed to Heaven, to treat of love, no farther than friendship extended to any mortal creature.

"Ah, divinest creature!" replied he, say not so, lest you destroy your devoted servant, whom neither monster, armed hosts or enchantments, could overcome."

"Truly," said she, "renowned Knight, "I have heard of your fame, and dislike not your person, but I am not at my own disposal, having vowed unalterable



chastity, therefore never more make any proffers of love to me."

"Have

“Have you so vowed?” said the noble Champion; then you shall see I can keep my vow as sacred as you; and here I vow to die and end the torment of my mind: wherewithal, pulling out a dagger, he had pierced his heart, had she not stopped his hand, promising within seven days, if he would live for her sake, to give him her body at the altar; and with this assurance he at that time left her.

During this space, the English Champion had made his love known to the Emperor, who approved of it, and commanded his daughter to entertain his courtship, that she might by marrying come into the world again. This much grieved the Princess; however, consulting with some of her fellow-nuns about it, they told her, she ought to sacrifice her life, rather than break her vow, which she performed, by stabbing herself when the priest was going to join her hand with St. George’s.

At this unexpected tragedy, tears flowed from all eyes, and the English Champion was going to fall on his sword had not they prevented him. St. George being thus afflicted, hastened to leave so fatal a place, and he and the other Champions took leave of the Emperor and his Court, and passed every one into their own country, of whose deeds and deaths there you will hear in the following chapter.



C H A P. IV.

How the Seven Champions returning to their own Country, in Expectation of leading peaceable Lives, met with violent Deaths—with the Manner of them, and how they came to be sainted, and called Patrons of their Country,—why the Leek is worn on St. David's Day, and the Cross on St. Andrew's, St. Patrick's, &c. as also of the Noble Order of the Garter, in Honour of St. George.



THESE noble Champions of Christendom, having run a long race of glory and renown, at last, years and weariness brought them to rest their bones in their native lands.

The first who left this earthly stage, was St. Patrick, who betaking himself to prayers in woods and deserts, at length caused him a house of square stone, out of which he never after went, but had his victuals given him thro' a little hole, being all the window he had, and before his death, he digged his grave with his nails, and there yielded up his pious spirit: afterwards a chapel was built there, with an altar over his grave, and he stiled Saint and Patron of his country.

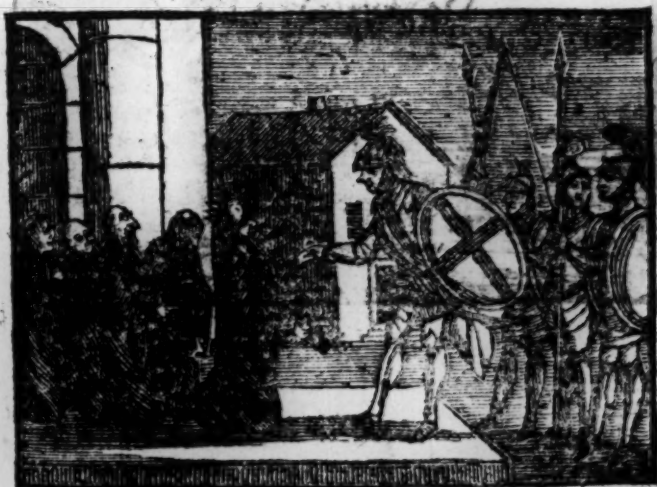
St. David coming into Wales, and finding it over run by swarms of Pagans and Saxons, he mustered a troop out of the frontiers, and to distinguish each other in fight, he ordered them to pluck a leak, and place it on their helmets; so that, having drawn the enemy to the plains, a bloody fight ensued, and the enemy were terri-



bly slaughtered and driven out of the country. St. David died soon after, of a violent fever, occasioned by over-heating himself in the battle, and was canonized a saint.

St. Dennis, of France, preaching up the Christian religion in his country, they being Pagans, a Knight of the Order of St. Michael, incensed the King against him so as to cause him to be beheaded without being heard; but his accuser, and others who mocked at his prayers, were struck dead with lightning, which so terrified the King, that he and his people turned Christians. He was afterwards sainted, and a stately church built over his monument.

St. James, coming into Spain, built a chapel, and getting together some devout Christians, they praised the

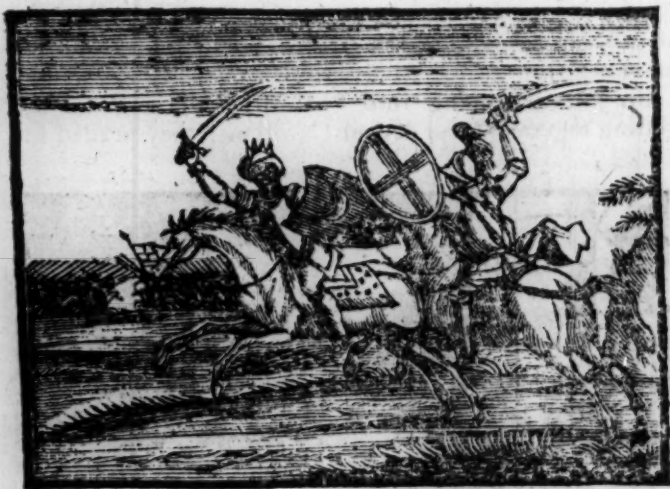


God of Heaven, which so incensed the King of the country, that he caused them to be shut up there and starved to death. James was afterwards sainted, and is killed to this day—The Titular Saint of Spain.

St. Andrew preaching the Gospel in Scotland, living in a cave, they fancied he was sent by the King as a spy, and fell upon him, mocked him, whilst he was praying for them, then cut off his head; which the King hearing went against them with armed forces, and destroyed them

them

them and their habitations. This St. Andrew is held the Patron of Scotland, who wear his cross on his day.



He was soon fainted, and a church dedicated to his memory.

St. Anthony being at Rome, viewing an ancient chapel, found a prophecy, that himself should be the patron of it; and after many great achievements, and noble acts, should return and die in it, with which he so far

far complied, that he continued there in prayers and meditations, till he payed Nature's debt, when he was



sainted, the place dedicated to him, and many honours conferred upon it.

St. George, the English Champion, found an unkind destiny at home, for having lived a contemplative life, he intended to spend the rest of his days in penitence. The King sent to inform him, that a dreadful dragon, near Dunmore, who had a mighty cave for her habitation, destroyed all the country about, so that men and cattle were daily devoured: against this monster, for his country's safety, the Champion immediately took his way, and in a terrible combat, for which deliverance there was much rejoicing, his vital spirits was infected by the quantity of poison thrown on him by the monstrous beast; so that, two days after, he died, charging his sons, who were returned from seeking adventures, to follow his steps; and recommended them to the King's care, who was present, and afterward preferred them to the chiefest offices and trust in his kingdom.

St.

St. George was buried in his chapel, bearing his name at Windsor, his effigies, killing a dragon, is worn



as the badge of honour to our Nobles; and the greatest Princes abroad are proud to be companions of it, or the noble Order of the Garter.

*Thus weary with long travel through great deeds;
For tired fancy there some respite needs;
So hoping it will give you all content,
Because howe'er 'tis took, it was well meant.*

F I N I S.

Des Sünders

Elend und Trost :

In einer Predigt am Palm-
Sonntage, 1718, aufs

Jes. LXVI. 2.

In der Teutschen Schloß-Capelle
Zu London vorgestellt :

Und nun
Zum andern male herausgegeben,

Von
ANTHON WILHELM BÖHMEN.



L O N D O N:

Bey J. Downing, in Bartholomew-Close,
bey West-Smithfield, 1721.